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Working Together: 1989 National Forum on Family Violence

Executive Summary
March 1990

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Canada

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The summary of the plenary presentations and addresses, discussion notes, recommendations and concerns contained in this document represent the views of the Forum participants as produced by the consultant and are not necessarily the views of the Government of Canada.

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I would like to take this opportunity to state that this summary is not intended as a substitute for the Proceedings Document from which it was drawn. The purpose of the Executive Summary is to serve as an introduction to the main ideas expressed at the Forum as a way of encouraging more Canadians to become involved in the prevention of family violence.

To this end, the reader is urged to request a free copy of the Proceedings Document or any other information on family violence in general from: National Clearinghouse on Family Violence, Family Violence Prevention Division, Social Service Programs Branch, National Health and Welfare, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 1B5, (613) 957-2938 or toll free 1-800-267-1291.

Ann D. Sharp,
Consultant

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Introduction

The federal government in June 1988 announced its intention to develop a long-term national approach to address the problem of family violence in Canada. This initiative has involved systematic consultation with other levels of government, with non-governmental organizations, and with the corporate sector. *Working Together: 1989 National Forum on Family Violence,* which took place June 18-21 in Ottawa, represented a key juncture in the consultation process because it provided an opportunity for representatives of all sectors to consider the problems and solutions together.

The objective of the National Forum on Family Violence was to contribute to the development of national responses to the problems of child abuse, wife abuse and elder abuse. The specific goals were to:

- sustain a commitment to the reduction of family violence
- improve the effectiveness of the efforts of all parties involved in all aspects of the family violence problem
- promote co-operation among the many agencies and levels of governments involved in all aspects of the family violence problem
- foster an interdisciplinary approach to the subject of family violence
- identify areas of fundamental concern which could be addressed in Canada's response to family violence
- establish priority options for dealing with family violence concerns over the long term

The participants in the National Forum were 400 individuals involved in family violence program and policy development, research, service delivery, advocacy, and public and professional education. Limiting the number of invitations to 400 was difficult, given the need to have representation from all sectors, fields, disciplines, special interest groups and geographic regions of Canada. The six departments hosting the National Forum (National Health and Welfare, Status of Women Canada, Secretary of State, Solicitor General, Justice Canada, and Indian Affairs and Northern Development) strove to achieve a balanced and wide representation of sectors and interests.

Participants were assigned to small multidisciplinary working groups to address five themes related to family violence:

- Theme I: Extent and Nature of Family Violence
- Theme II: Education of the Public, Professions and Workers in the Field
- Theme III: Prevention of Violence and Protection of the Vulnerable
- Theme IV: Justice in the Intervention and Prosecution of Family Violence
- Theme V: Support and Treatment for Victims and Offenders

Plenary addresses also focused on these themes. The 20 Forum working groups produced approximately 600 pages of raw notes, detailing their discussions, conclusions and recommendations.

The full Proceedings of *Working Together: 1989 National Forum on Family Violence* includes

1) an Introduction;
2) the Keynote Addresses;
3) The Working Group Discussions and Recommendations organized by theme and topic;
4) Participants' Perspectives regarding the National Forum; as well as Appendices of the Participant List, the Final Program, and the Terms of Reference for the themes.

The most critical outcome of the National Forum was the Discussions and Recommendations of the Working Groups, which comprise the major part of the Proceedings. The raw notes from the working groups were transcribed, footnoted as to source, organized by subject headings, then summarized in some cases. This section thus represents the opinions, recommendations and quotations of the *participants* in the National Forum.

The following summary of the Theme Panels and Keynote Addresses and the 20 Working Group discussions and recommendations are presented in the order in which they occurred at the forum. The methodology used for the prepared texts of the addresses relied primarily on selecting key excerpts. The group discussion notes and recommendations were summarized to provide overall coherency and in most cases the vocabulary was taken directly from the Proceedings Document. Quotes provided by anonymous participants are set in boldface and are found in the Theme summaries.

As prepared by the Consultant, the Executive Summary is not intended as a substitute for the considerable detail and diversity of opinions and concerns expressed within the Proceedings Document. Nor is it used in the context of advising the federal government. Rather, it is an introduction to the main or most frequently voiced ideas expressed by the speakers and groups to encourage wider involvement in the area of preventing family violence.

Readers are urged to request the larger document from which this summary was drawn (order form enclosed).

Comments, questions and concerns relating to either the Executive Summary or the Proceedings Document are welcomed and may be forwarded to the attention of the Federal Interdepartmental Working Group on Family Violence, in care of: Director, Family Violence Prevention Division, Social Services Program Branch, National Health and Welfare, 7th Floor, Brooke Claxton Bldg., Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 1B5.

Opening Address

Hon. Perrin Beatty, P.C. M.P., Minister of National Health and Welfare

There is nothing new about family violence. Wife assault, child abuse and sexual abuse have been seen as private matters to be handled within the family, and society and governments were not expected to interfere.

Within the past two decades, the myth of the family as a safe haven for its members has been shattered. First child abuse, then wife beating and now elder abuse are being revealed as social and health problems of startling magnitude. We have jarring numbers which tell us that family violence is a more serious and widespread problem than many Canadians realize.

The 1980s have been years of dynamic change and progress in the field of family violence, and acknowledgment of the cruelty has spurred women's groups, hospitals, social and legal aid workers, police, judges and provincial governments to effect change.

At the federal level, family violence and child sexual abuse initiatives have gathered resources from six federal departments, and more than $65 million, to discover new ways to prevent, protect and treat.

Family violence and child sexual abuse are public issues that demand both personal and parliamentary responses; to continue to build on the improvements of the past decade, we must work together.

The initiative has identified five key contributions to the process of change:

- information to better understand the extent and nature of the problem;
- the practical solutions recorded in the more than 350 funded projects;
- the essential consultations with non-governmental organizations;
- input from federal, provincial and territorial governments because the nature of the problem and the resources available vary with the different regions; and
- this National Forum on Family Violence.

We need commitment, flexibility and the ability to get help to those who need it. Through my department, we will work to support teamwork at individual, community and governmental levels. Remember, great social battles have been won in the past.

I wish you good luck, many ideas and great success in fulfilling the only appropriate theme for this conference, that of "Working Together."

Theme I: Extent and Nature of Family Violence – Panel Presentations

Linda MacLeod, Freelance Researcher and Consultant: Defining Wife Abuse By Redefining Our Ways of Living Together

In 15 years, our definition of wife abuse and our attempts to understand it have grown in complexity. With this growth have come a confusing plethora of solutions and hostilities and fragmentation across groups which share the same goals. Over the course of time, we have attempted to understand and deal with wife abuse in three stages and we are now embarking on a fourth. These stages are not discrete in reality, but may be depicted as separate for the sake of clarity and brevity and in terms of the emotion that energized them and the style of solution which resulted.

Caring and Sharing: In the early 1970s, the first transition houses were opened in Canada and were rooted in an ideology of empowerment, whereby women would help give other women the tools to build a life free from violence.

Anger and Control: Between 1980 and 1985, we became outraged and began dealing with the problem with clear, dramatic solutions. Here began the funding of shelters, education programs and changes in charging policies. We began to see that for multifaceted causes we needed multifaceted solutions.

Denial and Ownership: Accepting the "one in ten" estimate made many of us fear that the problem was too big to handle and we began to distance ourselves from the problem, shift credibility away from the shelter workers who said that "every woman" is at risk. Mental health experts and social workers took on a more prominent role with "vulnerable families" and "anger management" approaches. Increased involvement brought a struggle over ownership of the solutions with both positive and negative results.

Questioning and Pushing the Limits: Now we are attempting to build on what we have learned, on our accomplishments and on our failures, and we are daring to grapple with the complexities and uncertainties of that struggle. That means challenging our social structures and trying to understand the large picture.

Everyone in this room is part of this questioning and you are all part of a very challenging, exciting and difficult process. We are part of a nation-wide search for ways to prevent abuse against women, children and the elderly, but unless we understand that we are challenging our very way of living and helping one another, we may lose hope of ever finding a solution. We may need a prevention process rather than prevention programs if we are ever to stop the violence. May the muse be with us.

Andy Wachtel, Research Assoc., United Way of the Lower Mainland: Child Abuse

Defining the nature and extent of child abuse in our society is no easy task. However, it is one measure of how far we have come in 20 years that there is now wide public awareness that the issue is a complex one, that child abuse takes many forms, and that it is all too pervasive.

In addition to violence, child abuse takes the forms of neglect and emotional unavailability. It is also not just a "family" problem but rather a problem of the family as one institution within the whole set of social institutions.

One problem with seeing child abuse in the context of "family violence" is that we may risk seeing it as an adult problem. But the synthetic concept of "family violence" does underline the notion that a number of problems share certain risk factors, have similar consequences, and may be wide enough in scope to enable us to develop fairly fundamental initiatives and finally provide us with political currency.

In our mass media culture, where social issues are viewed as fads and where anything we can't fix quickly comes to be seen as depressing and then boring, perhaps we should welcome all the novel changes we can ring on these problems.

Nancy Gnaedinger, Consultant in Gerontology: Elder Abuse: A Brief Overview of Its Nature and Prevalence

First of all, what is elder abuse? Elder abuse can be described as "harm caused by an abuser to an adult who is vulnerable primarily or partly due to age. The abuse is not limited to physical harm but also includes psychological abuse, financial abuse and neglect."

Sharing characteristics with other forms of family violence (isolation, power imbalances, financial dependence, limited family resources, histories of addiction, psychopathology, low self-esteem, gender-based discrimination) it is also different because of stigma, reverse dependency, lack of peer support and because "family" is often an institution.

Elder abuse is of particular concern to Canadians because the aged population is growing exponentially relative to other age groups. What we know about the prevalence indicates that between 4% and 10% of the elderly are being abused. Typically, the victim is female and the abuser is a son or daughter, who may have been abused as a child, or the victim's spouse – wife abuse grown old. There are other dimensions to consider – abuse between residents of institutions and abuse of institutionalized residents by their caregivers.

Despite the apparently variable nature of elder abuse, there are some constants. Dependent elderly women are at greatest risk. It is not gender neutral. It is intolerable behaviour and in many cases it is criminal behaviour. How do we respond to the knowledge that elder abuse exists? We respond by sharing information, wisdom and energy with the goal of finding common solutions.

Theme I: Extent and Nature of Family Violence – Group Discussions and Recommendations

"We are all potential perpetrators[1]."

"Abuse of power and control is the root cause of all violence."

Generally, groups agreed that while women, children and the elderly are the primary victims of violence, there is, nonetheless, potential for violence in all of us. The main cause of family violence was identified as our patriarchal social structure which divides society into haves and have nots, powerful and powerless. This root cause is reinforced through norms, values, pornography, media images, competitiveness and the process of socialization.

Associated factors which contribute to the prevalence of violence include poverty, substance abuse, sex-role stereotyping/confusion and economic dependency.

To address systemic violence it is necessary to broaden and strengthen the ways in which we deal with it. For many, this means through the use of a feminist approach. One aspect that requires change is the way in which we understand family.

The family can no longer be viewed necessarily as a haven composed of caring individuals. Nor should we impose artificial "nuclear" structures upon its composition. Families are what they are and policies, approaches and programs should reflect the self-defined continuum of realities with the ultimate goal to enable *individuals* to live free from violence. Definitions of family and forms of violence should reflect victims' experiences and not lose sight of the fact that while "we are all potential perpetrators," certain groups are targeted for violence.

While the label "vulnerable" was found to be patronizing, there are groups who are at risk on a large scale: women, children, the elderly, the disabled, aboriginals, the isolated, caregivers, street kids and jail inmates.

Research on the incidence of violence is required. As well, it is important to study non-violent family, community and societal systems, attitudes and values which perpetuate violence, and forms of violence other than physical. Research should be valued more highly by the federal government and all studies should be available nationally.

For aboriginal peoples, powerlessness as a cause of family violence may be further aggravated by the lack of control they can exercise over their own culturally defined, community-based solutions.

Disabled persons require greater consideration and need to have their caregivers identified as family.

"There is no reason to make a person feel no good because you are 70 or 75."

Elderly victims of abuse experience neglect, violence and infantilization at the hands of their partners, families, caregivers and institutional staff. Overwhelmingly, abuse is associated with care or economic dependency. Vulnerability is exacerbated by fear of exposure of past abusive behaviour toward children, loss of family connections or institutionalization. Ultimately, the right and ability of elderly victims to make their own decisions should be respected.

Ethnocultural groups not only define family differently from the stereotyped nuclear structure, but also have barriers such as language which affect accessibility to information, services, resources and, in the end, alternatives to violence. Cultural sensibility must be used in ethnocultural communities to improve access to services and information.

Like immigrant women, women in rural and remote communities are doubly disadvantaged as a result of isolation and the lack of understanding of their experience and needs. Mainstream policies and research designs should be assessed for their usefulness to such communities.

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[1] The quotes (in boldface) included in the group discussion notes and recommendations are those of forum participants.

Theme II: Education of the Public, Professions and Workers in the Field – Luncheon Address

Rix Rogers, Special Advisor to the Minister of National Health and Welfare on Child Sexual Abuse

I am serving as Special Advisor to the Minister of Health and Welfare Canada for a two-year period – September 1987 to September 1989. My life has been deeply marked by the experiences of the last two years.

I had limited awareness about child sexual abuse in Canada and therefore few biases as I began the assignment and traveled the country to meet as many key players as I could: about 75 ministries of government, hospital and police teams, Crowns and judges, front-line workers, educators, therapists, victims, offenders, and non-offending parents, small towns and native leaders, institutional settings and professional associations, and the list goes on. I have met about 1,600 persons from coast to coast. I came to this task with naive assumptions that we were dealing with a serious but limited problem, and those assumptions have been shattered.

I have been humbled by you and shocked by the pain and anguish of those who suffer in families and survive abuse from people in positions of trust. Although there are many outstanding caregivers, there are others lacking sensitivity and compassion for, and training on, the realities and symptoms of child sexual abuse.

My conviction is that before thousands more lives are ruined, society as a whole and its responsible institutions must take action and make a moral commitment to consciously address child sexual abuse on a long-term basis.

I've learned that the needs and contributions of remote, rural, aboriginal and immigrant communities are particular; our professional groups still do not recognize that child abuse is widespread and they are not providing leadership; generic professional training is not adequate any longer; we are not focusing on multidisciplinary approaches; we underestimate the importance of skilled paraprofessionals; and we aren't listening.

Training is provided in a variety of places and the momentum is growing. But we must also turn our attention and energies to public education, to the underlying social attitudes and values related to male and female sexuality, to the process and messages of socialization, to pornography and to our need for an egalitarian society where all men and women, regardless of geography, culture or ability are able to coexist in healthy ways.

For this to happen, we need a vision for the future to unite and energize us. The historical patriarchal society has tended to condition males to be sexual predators and females to be sexual victims, but through a commitment to changing individual values and attitudes we can alter that.

While recognizing the important role of governments organizations and professionals, powerful change begins in the hearts of individuals. Let me challenge each of you to search your hearts for the kind of influence you can have, immediately, in shaping a better future for children, in all your spheres of influence. The time is right now! God bless.

Theme II: Education of the Public, Professions and Workers in the Field – Group Discussions and Recommendations

"Violence is a cancer of our society. We can look at it, study it or we can buy a scalpel and cut it out."

While considering the high level of illiteracy, public awareness and education should occur through mass media campaigns and through the development of school curriculum with involvement from schools, communities, government, the corporate sector and the media. Funding should be long-term to enable change to occur in values which condone and perpetuate violence. Such programs should also be designed to increase knowledge about existing services and their procedures.

Targeted to victims, perpetrators, children, parents, families, men, professionals and politicians, the messages communicated in such campaigns and curricula should emphasize the criminality of violent behaviour, underscore the pervasiveness of the problem of family violence and challenge long-standing beliefs and attitudes on the nature of abuse of power and control as the root cause.

Comprehensive programs which emphasize rights and responsibilities for family violence (modeled on the drinking and driving, drug abuse and smoking campaigns) should be developed. To ensure that programming is effective, appropriate, accountable and sensitive, it should be co-ordinated, planned and implemented by individual communities nationally.

Education and training of professions and workers should be ongoing, based primarily on the knowledge, needs and experience of victims and front-line workers, and should be multidisciplinary in approach. Such training should be targeted to and used by judges, police, defence lawyers, attorneys, teachers, doctors and corrections staff. Particular concern was expressed about reaching judges and doctors. Comprehensive training packages, programs and materials should be available and disseminated nationally and established within the federal mandate. The importance and relevance of community-based co-ordinating committees and protocols is clear throughout all five themes.

Drawing upon the culturally defined aspects of aboriginal communities, education and training should be holistic and community-based and should use aboriginal personnel, languages, values and concepts. The healing power of community ownership of the problem and self-defined solutions now being developed in such communities as Alkali Lake would be helpful models for non-aboriginal societies.

The public and professions require greater access to public education programs which broaden the definition of disability beyond the "wheelchaired" image and which emphasize the high level of vulnerability of disabled women to abuse.

Supportive and informative sensitization, training and education on the issue of elder abuse should be available for not only the elderly, but also their caregivers, whether care is provided in the home or in institutions.

New approaches are needed to address the changing cultural pattern of Canadian society. Providing information to immigrants through consulates, embassies, schools, cultural media and community centres is essential. As well, use should be made of language-appropriate community programs, cross-cultural training for workers and programs that help ethnocultural students to enter professions which deal with family violence.

Public education and curricula for rural and remote communities need to reflect a greater commitment from funding bodies and be sensitive to the limitations and special nature of providing care in isolated areas.

Theme III: Prevention of Family Violence and Protection of the Vulnerable – Banquet Address

Hon. Kim Campbell, P.C., M.P., Minister of State for Indian Affairs

Family violence is a pervasive yet hidden problem affecting women, men and children of every age, race and religion, of every socio-economic level from generation to generation and it occurs in an environment we have viewed as safe – the family. This is no less true in aboriginal communities.

Although aboriginal women comprise only about 2% of the total female population in Canada, 15% of the women who went for help to transition houses in 1985 were aboriginal. Aboriginal people have undergone some very particular strains – residential schooling, cultural dislocation, distrust of crisis workers who lacked a cultural understanding of the communities they intervened in and the struggle for cultural identity that is fundamental to having a sense of self.

The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development will be spending $1 million a year until 1992 with the Medical Services Branch of Health and Welfare to address the special needs of aboriginal people. An additional $400,000 per year until 1991 has been earmarked under the federal child sexual abuse initiative, and there will be more shelters for aboriginal women and their children on reserves as part of the CMHC Project Haven. The federal government is committed to finding solutions to family violence and we must persevere. I thank you for your concern and your commitment to this extremely important social issue.

Theme III: Prevention of Family Violence and Protection of the Vulnerable – Panel Presentations

Lorraine Berzins, Church Council on Justice and Corrections: On Preventing Family Violence: Sex, Spirit and Serendipity

I work for a group of Christian churches and I want to say right off the top that the church carries a great burden of responsibility for having helped to produce the problem of family violence and for maintaining the silence around it. We have been asking ourselves some deep, probing questions about this – **How Could We Have Allowed This To Happen? Why Has It Been Tolerated for so Long? How Could We Have Thought This Was All Right**? The painful reality we all face is that our whole community and our whole way of organizing our socio-economic and personal lives together needs fixing.

We produced a kit to get ordinary people to make connections in their lives (Church Council on Justice and Corrections, *Family Violence in a Patriarchal Culture: A Challenge to Our Way of Living*, Ottawa, 1988).

The aboriginal communities face the fact that their ability to live as a community needs healing. The problem of family violence is rooted in a pervasive set of values that has got hold of us all, and what we really need is a national searching of conscience and consciousness about this. We need to talk about our belief in a hierarchy of power, our control of others and the ethic of domination as ways of maintaining social "order" in our public institutions, organizations, our families and human relationships.

We have to ask hard questions about ourselves, our families, our responsibilities, what we want, what we do or don't do, whether we are parents, sexual or spiritual beings, politicians, managers, employers or decision makers. And there are many low- cost, existing ways in which we can challenge ourselves to understand more – sensitization workshops for MPs is one example.

I challenge you in this morning's discussions to start with the question: I don't think that family violence is important enough to be worth unsettling the functioning of government because.... I think we could learn a good deal from our answers about where we're really at on this issue.

Eunadie Johnson, Executive Director, Thompson Crisis Centre, Manitoba

Two recent events affected not my thinking about what I was going to say today, but my focus. The first: the brutal murders of Mary Anne Reid and her two small sons in Winnipeg on June 10, 1989, and the second, a call from a contact person in a small community north of Thompson to the shelter, referring an abused woman. In the second case, the woman was bringing her 10 children (ages 1 to 12) with her.

In the first situation, while members of the community (neighbours, police) were aware of ongoing violence in the home towards the woman and the children, nothing concrete was done in this "nice neighbourhood" with its "well-kept lawns." Why do we not insist that it is a community concern and responsibility and that it will not be tolerated? Why can't we protect women and children in "Neighbourhood Watch" programs the way we look out for each other's property? Why are we not "interfering"?

Do you sense anger? Well, there is. Nine women have died in Manitoba so far this year at the hands of their partners. The women I work with are stressed out. They are frightened for themselves, for the women in the shelters and for the women who do not access shelters.

The woman with ten children – why can't her community recognize that it's easier to remove the abuser and form a protective circle to provide support for that woman? What should that community have done for her? I am saying that it is ridiculous to uproot 11 people when the one person responsible for the crime is free to do as he pleases.

Prevention of violence and protection of the vulnerable is one and the same in that when you are preventing violence, you are also protecting the vulnerable. Men who are aware of other men who abuse their partners or powerless people (children or the elderly) in their families, should confront and condemn. Shelters must have funding to educate their communities. Abusers' groups must provide some method of evaluating success and must liaise with shelters to determine behavioural change.

Let me speak again from practical knowledge and focus on black women and violence. Black women are doubly victimized by racist and sexist oppression, and in some instances the women's movement has tended to romanticize the black female experience rather than to discuss the negative impact of that oppression. If you imply that black women are oppressed and yet strong, the reality is being ignored. To be strong in the face of oppression is not the same as overcoming oppression. We are not an "issue" but a "constituency." There must be recognition of cultural needs as they relate to service and therefore cultures must be involved in their development and delivery. When the laws are enforced, there should be no difference in the disposition of a native versus a white male. The focus should be placed upon the degree of violence.

With $40 million available in the area of family violence, I have a saying that every psychiatrist in his right mind will apply for research funds. What about the women working in the shelters. Don't you see, our very existence is education and a means of prevention through the service we provide.

I agreed to speak for three reasons: to educate, to lobby and, of course, to protest the injustices. Learn here what it means to be a front-line worker, that our contribution is valid, that we are the experts, that we are the professionals. Lobby for the abused women, children and elderly who say "stop the violence" and protest – I will always protest as long as we have capitalism, racism, sexism and all the "isms" which contribute to violence against women. We must protest because women like Mary Ann Reid and her children of Winnipeg are dying from violence.

Jillian Ridington, Researcher, Disabled Women's Network of Canada (DAWN)

At its founding meeting four years ago, DAWN Canada identified violence against women with disabilities as a key concern – an issue not addressed by either the women's movement or the disabled consumers' movement. In 1988, as researchers on a DAWN project investigating the needs of Canadian women with disabilities, we found that 40% of all respondents had been raped, abused or assaulted; 64% had been verbally abused; girls with disabilities have a less than equal chance of escaping violence; 53% of respondents who were disabled at birth or during childhood had been abused; women with disabilities have little access to services for victims of violence; women with multiple disabilities have been multiply abused.

It is important to note that the respondents and the women interviewed (total 245) were contacted through DAWN chapters and other disabled groups, through women's centres and organizations working for people with disabilities and may represent all disabled women.

We know from the Badgley Report that one out of two women are victims of unwanted sexual acts during their lives. For four out of five of us who are molested, the first experience will occur before age 18. The research I am currently conducting indicates that the odds against surviving childhood without experiencing abuse go up for girls with disabilities.

One reason abuse occurs is that there is great opportunity for it to occur. Individuals with disabilities are taught to be compliant, our mothers feel responsible for our situation, and we are more likely to become attached to our fathers. We are also vulnerable to unwanted touches because of lack of information and our need for physical caregiving well past the age of others.

Multiple disabilities make us even more vulnerable, according to the DAWN study. Sixty respondents had two types of disability (e.g., mobility and visual, or developmental and aural). Twenty-seven of them (45%) had been abused, raped or assaulted. Thirteen women had disabilities in three categories and, of those, eight had experienced violence. Only three women had more than three types of disability and all had been victims of violence.

Who abuses us? Husbands, ex-husbands, boyfriends, parents, caregivers, neighbours and relatives; 37% of the women were victims of wife abuse, 15% had been abused by parents, but 28% of the women who reported violence said the perpetrator was a stranger. It is very hard to report abuse because of fear, dependency, not being believed and lack of accessibility to services such as shelters and rape crisis centres. When we can get to them, we use them.

For women who are institutionalized, women who are dependent on others for personal care, and women who have been given no education about sex, the issue of consent is problematic. It may be impossible for them to protest against the abusive actions of a person they depend on emotionally, financially and physically. True consent must be informed consent and disabled women need appropriately communicated information about their rights. Women with disabilities must be protected against abuse and sexual assault. However, we must take great care not to deny the right of women with disabilities to enjoy and express their sexuality. That right has been denied far too often in medical practices (sterilization) and in law (restriction from consensual sexual activity, repealed in 1983).

It is the responsibility of society to prevent the abuse of persons with disabilities and to protect those who have been violated. All crisis, counselling and legal services for abused women and children must be completely accessible to women and children with disabilities. We will never know the true extent of violence against women with disabilities – nor even that against all women – until we can offer them an alternative to violence – a safe life, without pain and degradation.

Theme III: Prevention of Family Violence and Protection of the Vulnerable – Group Discussions and Recommendations

"Violence is unacceptable."

"We need to stigmatize violence."

"We have a responsibility to create a safe and caring environment for everyone in our society."

Strategies for preventing family violence were described as having three levels:

- primary prevention to stop it from happening at all;
- secondary measures to prevent it from happening again; and
- tertiary procedures to help people deal with the trauma of the event.

Prevention should be targeted not only to families, but also to institutions. Concern was expressed that "we are presently in a position of damage control rather than prevention."

Prevention strategies should promote shifts in our values, attitudes and behavioural norms to value the right of women, children and the elderly to dignity, safety and equality.

Guided by national leadership in the condemnation of violence, community-defined prevention programs should address violence as an outcome of our patriarchal society, have regional emphasis, be implemented nationally, and involve many sectors in a holistic approach. With this approach, violence can be eliminated.

Included in the comprehensive prevention strategy, community involvement, public awareness and education should be strengthened to be capable of sending a clear message that we live in a violent society, and that this is unacceptable. It is particularly important that this message reaches policy and political decision makers as well as churches, children, professionals, workers, special constituencies, the media and communities.

Protection planning must consider the importance of providing support for those who care for dependents, giving voice to the needs and experiences of victims, identifying offenders who continue working in institutions, working together in a concerted and organized fashion, having effective law enforcement practices, reporting abuse, removing the offender from the family home (Theme IV) and providing long-term affordable housing to women and children seeking alternatives to violent relationships.

In the area of prevention, co-ordination between the federal and provincial and territorial governments was identified as key. As well, funding is vulnerable to the tides of public attention and this creates enormous burdens for under resourced local services. Indeed, not only is new program funding needed, but existing services are also suffering from severely low budget levels. Funding procedures and criteria should be streamlined to lighten the work load of local services.

Corporations were urged to examine their own management initiatives and programs (e.g., employee assistance programs) and look for ways in which to promote prevention and sensitization internally.

The federal government should provide leadership with regards to family violence through partnership with provincial and territorial governments, national, provincial, territorial, regional and local non-governmental organizations, local services and committees, and the corporate sector. The National Clearinghouse on Family Violence was identified as an excellent mechanism through which research, training materials and inventories of different community-based initiatives and protocols could be collected and distributed nationally.

Prevention and protection policies for aboriginal peoples should be designed, owned and delivered by their own communities. Such initiatives should recognize that there are many people living off reserve whose needs are not met by reserve-based funding.

Given the vulnerability of elderly victims to acts of violence both within and outside of families, they *must be not be forgotten* in prevention or protection strategies.

Business Involvement and Family Violence

Introduction

Jacques Langevin, Chief Executive Officer, Avon Canada

Why is Avon here? How did we come to participate? We join with you here because of our concern to serve the needs, wants and aspirations of women as clients and as employees. We feel we must increase our societal involvement and are looking for a place to start.

We are also here for two other distinct reasons. The first is to learn how we can help. Having reviewed this week's very broad agenda and listened to the plenary sessions and what my group has had to say, I can tell you that the experience has been instructive, enlightening and, frankly, quite sobering. The second reason is to offer some tangible corporate support. Why?

Well, because I think we've been sensitized to the issues and believe that others have to come together to help overcome all kinds of violence. It is crucial that members of the corporate community join in with governments and the voluntary sector because wife abuse, child abuse and elder abuse are virtually everywhere. We need to develop trust and co-operation. I think that a lot of companies do care – they just need to be educated.

With this in mind, one of the things that Avon Canada feels it can contribute in terms of education is that we intend to distribute the results of your deliberations, in summary form, to 750 corporate leaders across the country. It's a first step and we look forward to working with the Department of National Health and Welfare in order to see what other ways we can come up with in order to try to bring these groups together. Thank you.

Luncheon Address

Rita Karakas, Executive Director, YWCA of Canada

I speak to you today of partnerships and the need for the voluntary sector, the government sector and corporations to work together.

"Family violence" is a bureaucratic euphemism to talk about battered, beaten up, abused *women* and daughters. I will not deny that there is spousal violence, elder abuse or that boys are abused but I will not accept the rewriting politically of what is the fact – it is mainly women.

Men are not the enemy. Corporations are not the enemy. Federal government is not the enemy. There are no enemies in this business. There are people within communities who don't recognize one another and who don't recognize our common interests and our ways of working together.

Through contact with the voluntary sector, corporations and government have discovered that people getting together to make a change in communities do a lot better, a lot faster, with a lot of ownership. The more of us at the table, the better. But we have to know each other.

Shelters, child care programs and pay equity must appear on the corporate agenda in acknowledgement that women are the backbone of the labour economy, but we must go to them from a position of strength and equal power, not just to ask for money. To determine our partners, we can research their lending, hiring, and investment policies in advance. We must expect corporations to bring into the workplace employee assistance programs, education pamphlets and seminars that teach what women and abusers need.

Involve the corporate sector. The days of bake sales and bingos have got to stop. We have to build coalitions in each of our communities. That's where we make the difference. The federal government is not thought of as a corporation, but it is the largest employer of women in this country and we should expect accountability.

I happen to believe that we in this room are what Canada is all about, and that includes corporations. We are all people. Put us all in this room, drop the labels, and look what we can do. We owe it to our sisters and our daughters. Thank you.

Theme IV Justice in the Intervention and Prosecution of Family Violence – Luncheon Address

Ian Glen, Assistant Deputy, Solicitor General, Police and Security Branch

As the criminal justice system is an area fraught with difficulties, I think you will agree that there *is* potential for innovations that have *substantial* impact in reducing family violence.

It may be misleading to think of this in terms of a *system* at all because of its complexity. Describe it as a network of individuals, each working towards the common goal of a society free from the ravages of crime. In this sense, everyone in this room is a part of the criminal justice system.

How can the criminal justice system reconcile the victim's need for protection, society's condemnation of the offence, and the positive value that we place on the family? Should the police change the way they respond to domestic violence? Is post-charge diversion the correct approach? What alternatives are there to traditional sentencing practices? Do the courts have a mandate to compel treatment? How can we improve treatment for offenders? These are some of the difficult questions facing you today.

In corrections, we are developing effective treatment models for offenders. We are concerned with breaking that cycle. As police, we are looking for innovative ways to serve the community.

Who can blame the victims for being reluctant to submit their personal anguish to the scrutiny of the criminal justice system? The important realization is that the police can assist in finding solutions to crime in the community. However, without the involvement of that community, social problems leading to crime will remain unsolved. The interaction must be a two-way street.

Some initial evidence suggests that the national charging policy for wife assault cases discourages victims from reporting, or causes repeat offending, but if the needs of victims are to be addressed, attention must be given to what happens after the *criminal* charge is laid. Police intervention must be tied to services for victims, training and awareness programs in the community and to treatment programs for abusive men. However, in many communities across Canada, these services do not exist.

While we are often faced with the need for fast solutions to immediate problems, we also need to have long-term preventive strategies. While the training of professionals and education of the public are priorities on a national scale, ultimately *only through prevention will the cycle of family violence be broken*. Thank you.

Theme IV: Justice in the Intervention and Prosecution of Family Violence – Group Discussions and Recommendations

"As individuals, we are delegating to institutions what we do not want to do ourselves. We need to co-operate with them and give them an appropriate role."

"The challenge is how to work with the justice system to make a better world and to institute and develop a full dialogue process so that we might work together. All sectors of the community must be represented. We need advisory, inter-agency committees at all levels – agency, county, municipal, provincial and federal."

"How do we deal with the research fact that women who have reported to the justice system have stated they would not do so a second time? The price was too high."

Offering comprehensive guidelines for the development of criminal justice interventions, the groups focused on the needs and experiences of victims, offenders and those who intervene.

While we recognize that this system cannot control all violence, we know that it is nonetheless capable of reinforcing the societal message that violence is a criminal act.

Inefficiency and inappropriate use of mediation were some of the criticisms of this system. As well, the Criminal Code is as yet unable to deal with forms of abuse other than physical. Realities such as prosecution delays, and overlaps between family, criminal and civil law can undermine victims' ability to stop abuse, thereby contributing to secondary victimization. There is a need for community-based Victim Witness Assistance Programs, and their benefits and structures were outlined.

"Funding will never be available to put in jail all the people who are charged."

"We would be put back years if the current policy in favour of charging were dropped."

"The laying of charges can only be effective in a context of a community-wide system of support and a user-friendly justice system."

"Women know best what women want."

While mandatory charging for wife assault can be an effective deterrent, there are national variations in its application. Reasons for this include victim-blaming, limitations of the Criminal Code for the prosecution of psychological, emotional and economic abuses, and the unwillingness of police to intervene, particularly when women do not want charges laid. Restraining orders and peace bonds do not guarantee safety. Police officers need support and resources to help them do their job. They feel the problem has been sloughed off on them.

"There should be a mandate for concern rather than a mandate for reporting by professionals."

The discussion notes on the issue of possible mandatory reporting of violence against women and the elderly emphasized that the present policy of mandatory reporting of child abuse has overloaded the child protection system to the point of danger. With failure to report suspected child abuse cases being itself a criminal act in Canada, the number of cases referred to Child Protection has increased well beyond the levels of funding available.

As well, a mandatory reporting policy for abuse of adults may undermine the individuals' right to control their own lives. With no clear way out of this dilemma between rights and safety, it is essential to have adequate support systems in place before beginning any more mandatory reporting policies.

"Our focus has shifted to the perpetrators and offenders. Some feel that the justice system caters to offenders while victims are sadly neglected. We need victims' programs and services. Ultimately, however, the focus must be on the perpetrator if the cycle of violence is to be broken."

Considerable attention is paid to removing offenders from the family home instead of the victim or non-offending parent. While philosophically, offenders and not victims should suffer the consequences of dislocation, our present inability to protect women, children and the elderly in their homes is a real concern. Other issues covered include the efficacy of diversion programs, court-mandated treatment for men who abuse and the desperate need for treatment programs within the corrections system.

A paper entitled "Alternative Response to Family Violence," written by J.H.C. Clarke in preparation for the forum, is included in the Proceedings Document at the unanimous request of his group. Portraying a policing perspective, the author (an instructor at the Atlantic Police Academy) examines the issue of offender responsibility for abusive behaviour.

Research should be conducted with women who have been through the legal process to determine what worked, what didn't and what their experiences were.

Native communities in the North call the "Flying Court" the "Flying Circus."

Aboriginal peoples want more choices both in and outside the criminal justice system and more support for community-based and culturally sensitive initiatives.

"Young offenders are often angrier when they come out of jail than when they were admitted because they did not receive rehabilitation."

Children's needs include being believed, being supported and having the judicial process explained to them. Children's services need a much higher level of funding, and those who interview child victims need specialized training.

Better records should be kept by both the police and shelters to identify incidences of abuse of disabled persons.

For elderly victims, the issue of mandatory reporting should be debated and institutional abuse better understood and documented.

Ethnocultural groups need information and police need cultural sensitivity training.

The special needs of isolated and rural communities should be considered.

Theme V: Support and Treatment for Victims and Offenders – Panel Presentations

Maggie Hodgson, Executive Director, Nechi Institute, Alberta

Elders, ladies and gentlemen, I welcome you to join me in a journey today. The Native people journey through their stories. I will tell you one, for it is important for us to deal with family violence with new eyes.

Through song, dance, and personal responsibility, Mr. Rabbit was able to have his eyes dance in the air and then return. Mr. Fox, so impressed with this gift, asked Rabbit to share it with him. Rabbit agreed and taught Fox how to have his eyes dance and return but cautioned, "The only thing is that you must only do this gift three times." The Wolf said, "Yes, oh yes." After using the gift three times, Mr. Wolf came to Ottawa but he so wanted to show his special gift to his friends that he used the gift one more time...but his eyes did not pop back into his head. "Oh dear, oh dear, I was not responsible and I have lost my eyes," he said to Mr. Mouse when he saw him next. Mr. Mouse gave Mr. Fox one of his own eyes and rolling around in his eyelid, Mr. Fox could see only *small detail* and *single individuals* with his mouse eye. He thanked Mr. Mouse with ceremonial tobacco, but he wanted to see more, so he asked Mr. Buffalo for one of his eyes, and he agreed. "Thank you, thank you," he said. Now he could see all at once and *see far, see the community* and the *family* and the *future*. He then knew he was equipped to go to the Ottawa Forum on Family Violence with his gift of the mouse eye that gave him detailed sight and the buffalo eye that gave him the bigger picture. With his new eyes, he could see not only the justice problem, not only the safety issue but also across turf issues.

I will speak of one Indian Reserve and community who have used their mouse eyes to see the offenders' and survivors' pain – that grew to using their buffalo eyes to see how community education, Indian spiritual ceremony, breaking denial, treatment, working with their judge, Crown prosecutor, police, elders, peer counselling and therapy gave them healing, and to know that they want a family healing centre, for which they raised $200,000.

For the 100 adults and 200 children of this community, it took formal and informal *sober* leadership, the inclusion of community Indian ceremony and spirituality, removal in layers of denial about spousal, elder, child abuse and child sexual abuse. With love and spirituality and the spiral circles of individuals, families, community, justice and the creator, they have moved towards health since the early 1970s by:

1 listening to a child who wanted to live without alcoholism and neglect;
2 developing a community intervention process for alcoholism;
3 intensively focusing on spirit and community;
4 training hard through experiential learning about communicating, personal growth, alcohol and drug addiction;
5 having sober leaders both young and old who cared about extended family values;
6 recognizing the contradiction of caring about individuals *and* families at the same time;
7 dealing with that contradiction by having their energy reflect their value of the extended family;
8 having a band member in the school charged with child abuse in 1985 when 95% of the community had achieved sobriety;
9 not denying the problem, their pain or their need for help;
10 inviting me and others to work with the survivors, and talking about how the violence had spread and about its forms: child physical and sexual abuse, spousal abuse, abuse by priests in residential schools, raping of women elders, spiritual abuse by threats of bad medicine within families and the many faces of abuse of power and privilege in their community;
11 hearing and supporting each other: the offender and his extended family going into treatment together and the community going to court for the offender, the victim and the family;
12 having the resources grow: having separate sweat lodges for men and women for the spiritual process of healing;
13 holding weekly peer counselling sessions;
14 responding as a community to the 1988 suicide of a young gay man;
15 assembling youth groups to train young people to lead workshops;

16 incorporating the indigenous culture and language in the school and community;
17 dealing with new charges of rape and incest as a community last year, with the core planning done by survivors;
18 establishing a co-dependency treatment program to ensure healthy interventions;
19 convening a co-ordinating committee made up of the Crown prosecutor, police, council, community and social services;
20 supporting the victim as a team from the moment of reporting;
21 training 40 community members for 10 days on attitudes and basic issues related to violence;
22 holding trials on the reserve;
23 defining the ways in which amends were to be made by a priest offender;
24 encouraging offenders to volunteer to be charged so that they could be treated;
25 having elected leaders trained to understand;
26 celebrating their growing health in song and dance, and as families, after court convictions with the judge and Crown prosecutor present; and finally,
27 committing themselves to the treatment and involvement of their body, mind, spirit, the justice system, and the environment in the journey to health through fasting.

Ladies and gentlemen, *that* community *in their pain* have used their *mouse eyes* and their *buffalo eyes* to look at old problems in a new way. That is our challenge and our gift to you today.

Jennifer Mercer, Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Newfoundland and Labrador

I want to talk to you about the Interagency Committee on Violence Against Women in St. John's, Newfoundland, as a model for co-ordinating services to women who have been victims of violence. In 1983, as a researcher and after speaking with survivors of wife abuse and their agency caregivers, I realized that organizational problems caused women to feel more powerless and more victimized than before they sought help. This information was brought to the Advisory Council and they established a co-ordinating committee.

The first problem we encountered at the end of a four-year planning period was mistrust among agencies that centred on how the council was perceived both in and outside government. We stepped back, provided tools and helped the committee to establish itself. The next step was to deal with mistrust between 40 (and later 104) agencies who often were not aware of each other. This lack of knowledge dispelled questions about whether co-ordination was needed!

The London Co-ordinating Committee was very generous and we took their advice to balance membership between justice agencies and community groups.

In January 1988, the Interagency Committee on Violence Against Women had its first meeting and the process of candidly dealing with mistrust began in earnest. Much of the progress in improving service to women was made at the subcommittee level. Each of the health, justice, direct service delivery, education and social policy subcommittees have, overall, vastly improved knowledge of and service to the issue of violence against women. It is our hope that in time a clergy subcommittee will be struck.

We learned to turn frustrations into opportunities for learning about each other, learning how to work together and learning so that we can teach others. We struggle with collective decision making, administration and coordination of the committee and its six subcommittees and with changing personnel.

Members of the Interagency Committee feel that their efforts have improved their knowledge of resources and have provided a network of support for shared concerns, making what they do easier and better for survivors.

We are planning to take our model to rural areas in the province. Our goal is not to build a better system but to live in a society that is free of violence. Our criteria for choosing objectives is how far that task will bring us toward our goal.

Theme V: Support and Treatment for Victims and Offenders – Group Discussions and Recommendations

"In intervention, we cannot choose only one door. We must go through all the windows."

"We would like to see a budget equivalent to that of national defence created for the defence of women and children."

"The real issue is equality and the power of any individual to choose."

The discussion notes and recommendations for this theme centred on intervention and intervention values, and the issues of ownership and competition for funds, volunteers and community responses, in addition to the treatment and service needs of victims and offenders. Regardless of the type of service, treatment designs must have at their core protection of the victim and the creation of values of wellness and non-violence.

A major concern regarding the treatment and support for victims was the lack of contact between men's and women's services, the consequence being that the safety of women is not ensured while the man is in treatment. Accountability of men's groups to women's groups was identified as important. As well, it is difficult to have "whole" as opposed to "partial" treatment practices validated (i.e., simultaneous treatment for addiction and violence).

A great deal of attention was paid to the treatment and service needs of offenders. The need for a continuum of treatment models capable of meeting a diversity of needs was emphasized. Treatment founded upon the principle of men taking responsibility for their behaviour with the goal of achieving real behavioural and attitudinal change not unlike "consciousness raising" was recommended.

The lack of contact between men's services was a major concern, as was the need for a feminist intervention strategy and more treatment programs.

The need for treatment both inside and outside the corrections system was noted, as was the importance of conducting meaningful evaluation research on the effectiveness of such programming.

On the topic of mandatory referral for treatment, it was noted that the process appears to work in a group treatment setting.

Self-help as a treatment model was seen as a means through which victims and offenders can heal themselves. A partnership between professional and self-help methods was suggested.

The importance of services working together either formally through co-ordinating committees or through regular contact was judged an important way in which communities can better meet the needs of victims and offenders.

The notes on the topic of sheltering focused on the needs and experiences of shelters for women. While woman-centred shelters need more stable funding and a broadening of services, they cannot meet every woman's needs, nor is it appropriate that they shoulder all responsibility for ending male violence against women.

Research needs include evaluations of offender treatment programs, studies on the needs of rural and remote women, security in shelters, developing formative research methodologies, and better access to research findings through national dissemination of research findings.

Federal and provincial/territorial governments were asked to recognize how desperately underresourced front-line services are and to "cut through the minimizations and denial of the significance of this epidemic [of violence]." The Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation was urged to provide operational funds to meet specific regional needs.

Treatment and sheltering on and off reserves must be established, supported and defined by aboriginal communities to promote the "circle of healing." Treatment for substance abuse must be tied to violence intervention. Aboriginal children should no longer be placed in white foster homes.

Alternatives to the present sheltering structure are required for elderly victims of violence in consideration of their mobility and lifestyle needs. One suggestion was for shelters to be attached to seniors' residences. Overall treatment and service needs are not being met through such programs as "Meals on Wheels" or homemaker services, and greater involvement of institutional staff and health and social service professionals is required.

Treatment for children should be broadened to include those who witness adult violence, young offenders and missing children. It is very important that the needs of these children be met with increased resources and sensitivity. Although the trend to take children into care has subsided somewhat, there is still concern that offenders remain in the home while children go into isolated foster care.

Changes in policy and practice are needed for the treatment and sheltering needs of ethnocultural women. Consideration should be given to their need to stay longer in shelters to facilitate their adjustment, the efficacy of ethnocultural interpreter services which increase use of abuse-related services, and the importance of enabling existing services to meet the ethnocultural needs of their communities.

Northern communities need alternatives to the mainstream sheltering model, so that women may deal with localized pressures to keep their problem a secret.

Closing Address

Hon. Barbara McDougall, P.C., M.P., Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

I want to thank you all for participating in this Forum on Family Violence. It is a breakthrough that we have been able to bring together so many on this complex issue and I put high value on consultation as a way of eradicating wife, child and elder abuse.

The root causes of violence are entrenched and the solutions complex but it has become increasingly clear that, just as no family or organization alone can grapple with the problem of family violence, no government can effectively deal with it, without the co-operation of other levels of government *and* other groups in society. The point about the need for corporate involvement is well made, I believe.

Through the family violence and child sexual abuse funding, the federal government has undertaken a strong leadership role. By example, through Project Haven, we have tried to orient services toward Indian and Inuit women, immigrant and visible minority women, disabled, rural and isolated women. While there are problems, I would not like to see us let up from a good start. We are but one partner. The provinces, community groups, voluntary organizations, agencies and associations are the foundation of efforts to combat family violence in this country. This forum was convened to discuss where we go from here.

You've discussed, debated, been stimulated and frustrated, contributed to our understanding of the issue and identified areas such as public education, the role of the media and delivery of service as key areas for the future.

Your suggestions for preventing family violence cover a spectrum of approaches emphasizing empowerment and development of self-worth, multidisciplinary designs and the importance of long-term planning. In all cases, you've challenged society's general acceptance – even celebration – of violence. There are no quick fixes.

Your recommendations and contributions, differences and agreements join those resulting from our consultations with provinces, territories and non-governmental groups. Yes, the government is committed.

We must continue to find ways to network, to argue, to discuss, to agree, to disagree, to help families and individuals who are abused, to promote permanent change in attitudes and values, to have men understand that it is not okay to beat their wives, to have children understand that some forms of touching are not okay and to accord our elders the dignity they deserve.

Then and only then will women, children and older people have protection and peace, and will our communities reflect the values of peace, honour and dignity that should be fundamental to this country.

Participants' Perspectives of the National Forum

Participants had the opportunity to record their expectations, concerns and comments on evaluation forms distributed at the end of the National Forum, and also within the Working Group Notes. In addition, spoken concerns related to aboriginal, feminist and racist issues.

Based on all of these sources, the following concerns were identified; inadequate representation from aboriginal groups; the need for accurate reporting of aboriginal issues; concerns that racial biases may have stimulated some points made by groups in relation to new Canadians; inadequate representation from immigrant groups, seniors, front-line workers, the disabled and francophones; an overly ambitious agenda; lack of microphones in the plenary sessions; and misreporting in the on-site summaries.

Despite these concerns, over three quarters of the participants who completed the evaluations indicated that their expectations had been met completely or to some extent. And finally, a summary (as prepared by Eunadie Johnson) of concerns and recommendations to government that were presented by an ad hoc feminist caucus group is reproduced in the Proceedings Document.

Gouvernement du Canada	Government of Canada

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Conférence nationale sur la violence familiale 1989:
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Le résumé des exposés et discours présentés durant la séance plénière, les notes de discussion, les recommandations et les préoccupations dont fait état le présent document représentent les opinions des participants, telles qu'elles ont été présentées par la conseillère, et ne représentent pas nécessairement les opinions du Gouvernement du Canada.

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J'aimerais profiter de la circonstance pour souligner que le présent document synthèse ne remplace pas le procès-verbal de la conférence. Le but est de résumer les principales idées exprimées à la Conférence afin d'encourager un plus grand nombre de Canadiens à s'intéresser à la question de la prévention de la violence familiale.

À cet égard, nous invitons le lecteur à se procurer un exemplaire gratuit du procès-verbal de la conférence ou toute autre information sur la violence familiale en général. Veuillez communiquer avec le Centre national d'information sur la violence dans la famille, Division de la prévention de la violence familiale, Direction générale des programmes de service social, Santé et Bien-être social Canada, Ottawa (Ontario), K1A 1B5, (613) 957-2938 ou composez sans frais 1-800-267-1291.

Ann D. Sharp
Conseillère

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Introduction

En juin 1988, le gouvernement fédéral annonçait son intention d'élaborer une stratégie à long terme pour s'attaquer au problème de la violence familiale au Canada. On a procédé, à cet égard, à des consultations systématiques avec les autres paliers de gouvernement, avec des organismes non gouvernementaux et avec le secteur privé. La *Conférence nationale sur la violence familiale 1989: Main dans la main,* tenue à Ottawa du 18 au 21 juin, a été un point tournant du processus de consultation parce qu'elle a donné l'occasion aux participants d'examiner ensemble les problèmes et d'envisager des solutions.

L'objet de la Conférence nationale sur la violence familiale était d'envisager des solutions, à l'échelle nationale, aux problèmes de la violence conjugale et de la violence à l'égard des enfants et des personnes âgées. Les principaux objectifs étaient les suivants:

- Maintenir la volonté de tous à lutter contre la violence familiale;
- Rendre plus efficaces les efforts des intervenants en vue d'une réduction de la violence familiale;
- Promouvoir la coopération entre les nombreux organismes et les divers paliers de gouvernement dans tous les aspects du problème de la violence familiale;
- Favoriser une approche multidisciplinaire;
- Préciser les problèmes contextuels fondamentaux auxquels il faut s'attaquer pour réduire la violence familiale;
- Établir des priorités à longue échéance pour lutter contre la violence familiale.

Les 400 participants à la Conférence nationale oeuvrent dans des domaines tels l'élaboration de politiques et de programmes en matière de violence familiale, la recherche, la prestation de services, la défense des droits, l'éducation auprès du grand public et la formation professionnelle. Comme il était nécessaire que tous les secteurs, toutes les sphères d'activités, disciplines, groupes d'intérêts particuliers et régions géographiques soient représentés, il a été difficile de limiter le nombre des participants à 400. Les six ministères hôtes de la Conférence nationale (Santé et Bien-être social, Condition féminine Canada, Secrétariat d'État, Solliciteur général, Justice et Affaires indiennes et du Nord) se sont efforcés d'arriver à une représentation juste et équitable.

Les participants ont été répartis en petits groupes de travail multidisciplinaires pour traiter de cinq thèmes relatifs à la violence familiale:

- Thème I: Étendue et nature de la violence familiale.
- Thème II: Éducation du public, des professionnels et des travailleurs.
- Thème III: Prévention de la violence et protection des personnes à risque.
- Thème IV: Interventions et poursuites judiciaires dans les cas de violence familiale.
- Thème V: Soutien et traitement des victimes et des contrevenants.

Les discours prononcés durant la séance plénière portaient également sur les thèmes susmentionnés. Les 20 groupes de travail ont produit un brouillon d'environ 600 pages de leurs discussions, conclusions et recommandations.

Le procès-verbal de la *Conférence nationale sur la violence familiale 1989: Main dans la main* comprend:

1) une introduction;
2) les discours thématiques;
3) les discussions et recommandations des groupes de travail pour chaque thème et sujet;
4) les commentaires des participants sur la Conférence nationale; et finalement les annexes: la liste des participants, le programme définitif, et les points se rattachant à chaque thème.

Le procès-verbal de la conférence fait largement état des discussions et des recommandations des groupes de travail, car elles constituent la pierre angulaire de l'événement. Les notes du brouillon de la conférence ont été transcrites, classées par sujet, résumées dans certains cas, et on a indiqué les sources en bas de page. Cette section présente donc des opinions, recommandations et extraits de propos de participants à la Conférence nationale.

Dans le résumé présenté ci-après, les exposés des spécialistes, les discours thématiques et les discussions et recommandations des vingt groupes de travail sont présentés dans l'ordre chronologique de la Conférence. Pour les textes des discours, on a simplement choisi les points dominants. Les notes de discussions et les recommandations des groupes ont été abrégées pour donner une plus grande cohésion à l'ensemble du document et, dans la plupart des cas, on a utilisé le vocabulaire du procès-verbal de la Conférence. Les citations des participants anonymes sont en caractères gras et se trouvent sous les résumés de chaque thème.

Le document synthèse de la conférence, tel qu'il a été préparé par la conseillère, ne remplace pas le procès-verbal, où sont consignées les opinions exprimées et les sujets de préoccupation identifiés. Le présent document n'a pas servi de fondement aux recommandations faites au gouvernement fédéral. Il présente plutôt les idées les plus fréquemment exprimées par les participants et vise à encourager un plus grand nombre de personnes à s'engager dans la lutte contre la violence familiale.

Les lecteurs sont invités à se procurer le procès-verbal de la Conférence (bon de commande ci-inclus).

Les commentaires, questions et observations sur le document synthèse et sur le procès-verbal de la Conférence sont appréciés et doivent être adressés au Groupe de travail interministériel sur la violence familiale, à l'attention du Directeur de la Division de la prévention de la violence familiale, Direction générale des programmes de services sociaux, Santé et Bien-être social, 7^{e} étage, Immeuble Brooke-Claxton, Pré Tunney, Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 1B5.

Discours d'ouverture

M. Perrin Beatty, ministre de la Santé nationale et du Bien-être social

Il n'y a rien de nouveau sur la violence familiale. Violence conjugale, violence à l'égard des enfants et exploitation sexuelle ont longtemps été considérées comme des questions privées qui devaient se régler dans le cadre du milieu familial, et on ne s'attendait pas à ce que les gouvernements et la société interviennent.

Au cours des deux dernières décennies, le mythe de la famille représentant un havre de sécurité a volé en éclats. La violence à l'égard des enfants, puis la violence conjugale, et maintenant les mauvais traitements infligés aux personnes âgées sont devenus des problèmes sociaux et de santé d'une ampleur alarmante. Les statistiques dont nous disposons nous indiquent que le problème est bien plus sérieux et répandu que la plupart des Canadiens ne l'imaginent.

Les années 80 ont été marquées de progrès dans la reconnaissance du problème de la violence familiale et des sévices qui l'accompagnent. Les groupes de femmes, les hôpitaux, les travailleurs sociaux, l'aide juridique, les corps policiers, les juges et les gouvernements provinciaux ont commencé à réagir.

Des programmes ont été élaborés par le fédéral en matière de violence familiale et d'exploitation sexuelle des enfants, grâce aux efforts conjugués de six ministères qui ont consacré plus de 65 millions de dollars à la recherche de nouveaux modes de prévention, de protection et de traitement.

La violence familiale et l'exploitation sexuelle des enfants sont des préoccupations universelles qui doivent être examinées autant par les personnes que par les gouvernements. Si nous voulons continuer à bâtir sur les progrès accomplis durant la dernière décennie, nous devons travailler ensemble.

Dans le cadre du programme d'intervention en matière de violence conjugale, on a identifié cinq moyens d'action essentiels:

- l'information, afin de mieux comprendre l'étendue et la nature du problème;
- les solutions pratiques identifiées dans plus de 350 projets subventionnés;
- les consultations avec des organismes non gouvernementaux;
- la participation des gouvernements fédéral, provinciaux et territoriaux, parce que la nature des problèmes et des ressources disponibles varient selon les différentes régions du pays;
- la Conférence nationale sur la violence familiale.

Nous devons nous engager à lutter contre la violence familiale, nous devons faire preuve de souplesse et apprendre à aider les gens qui en ont besoin. À mon ministère, nous apporterons notre soutien à la collaboration entre les personnes, les groupes communautaires et les différents paliers de gouvernement. Souvenez-vous que nous avons déjà remporté de grands combats sociaux dans le passé.

Je vous souhaite bonne chance et j'espère que nous pourrons tous atteindre l'objectif de travailler «Main dans la main».

Thème I: Étendue et nature de la violence familiale – Exposés des spécialistes

Linda MacLeod, conseillère et chercheuse indépendante: définir la violence conjugale en redéfinissant notre façon de vivre ensemble

Depuis quinze ans, la définition que nous donnons à la violence conjugale et notre perception ont été modifiées. Au cours de ces années sont apparues de nombreuses solutions, mais aussi une certaine hostilité entre les groupes poursuivant pourtant le même but. Cette évolution s'est déroulée en trois étapes, et nous abordons maintenant la quatrième. En réalité, ces étapes ne sont pas distinctes, mais par souci de clarté et de concision, nous les décrirons séparément, car elles sont effectivement distinctes sur le plan de leur dynamique émotionnelle et des solutions qui ont été retenues.

Compréhension et soutien émotif: Au début des années 70, les premières maisons de transition ont été ouvertes au Canada; des femmes y aidaient d'autres femmes à se donner les moyens de bâtir une vie sans violence.

Colère et détermination: Entre 1980 et 1985, nous avons constaté toute l'indignité de la situation et nous avons commencé à y apporter de véritables solutions. C'est alors qu'on a ouvert des maisons d'hébergement, créé des programmes d'éducation et apporté des changements aux politiques de mise en accusation. Nous avons compris qu'il fallait une intervention tous azimuts face à un problème aux multiples facettes.

Recul et appropriation: Devant les statistiques qui révélaient qu'«une femme sur dix» était victime de violence conjugale, nombre d'entre nous ont craint que le problème soit trop grand pour qu'on puisse en venir à bout. Nous avons alors pris nos distances, accordant moins de crédibilité aux travailleurs des maisons d'hébergement qui affirmaient que «toutes les femmes» étaient susceptibles d'être victimes de violence. Les spécialistes en santé mentale et les travailleurs sociaux ont commencé à jouer un rôle plus important, en abordant le problème sous l'angle des «familles à risque» et en utilisant la méthode de la «gestion de la colère». L'accroissement de l'intérêt a engendré une lutte pour la paternité des solutions, ce qui a entraîné des résultats à la fois positifs et négatifs.

Questionnement et dépassement: Aujourd'hui, nous tentons de tirer profit de ce que nous avons appris, de nos réussites et de nos échecs, et nous osons affronter les difficultés et les incertitudes. Il nous faut remettre en question nos structures sociales et essayer d'avoir une vision plus large du problème.

Toutes les personnes qui assistent à la conférence sont engagées dans ce processus de questionnement, ce processus exigeant, excitant et difficile. Nous sommes à la recherche de moyens de prévenir la violence faite aux femmes, aux enfants et aux personnes âgées. Toutefois, nous devons comprendre qu'il nous faut remettre en question toute notre façon de vivre et de nous entraider si nous ne voulons pas perdre l'espoir de trouver un jour une solution. Il se peut que nous ayons besoin d'un processus de prévention plutôt que de programmes de prévention pour réussir enfin à enrayer la violence. Je vous invite à y réfléchir.

Andy Wachtel, chercheur associé, United Way of the Lower Mainland: l'enfance maltraitée

Définir la nature et l'étendue du problème de l'enfance maltraitée dans notre société n'est pas chose facile. Cependant, on peut constater tout le chemin parcouru depuis vingt ans lorsqu'on voit que la population comprend maintenant la complexité de la situation et, que le maltraitement a plusieurs formes et se manifeste un peu partout.

Quand on parle d'enfance maltraitée, on ne parle pas seulement de la violence, mais aussi de la négligence et de la privation d'affection. Il ne s'agit pas uniquement d'un problème «familial», mais plutôt d'un problème qui touche la famille en tant qu'institution parmi un ensemble d'institutions sociales.

Si nous considérons les mauvais traitements infligés aux enfants dans le contexte de la «violence familiale», nous risquons de les voir comme un problème d'adulte. Pourtant, la notion de «violence familiale» regroupe divers problèmes qui ont les mêmes facteurs de risque et les mêmes conséquences, des problèmes qui sont suffisamment importants pour que nous adoptions des moyens d'intervention assez fondamentaux et que le gouvernement élabore des politiques adaptées aux besoins.

Dans notre contexte culturel fondé sur la communication de masse où les questions sociales sont considérées comme éphémères, alors que les problèmes auxquels on ne trouve pas de solutions immédiates sont perçus comme démoralisants et contrariants nous devrions accueillir avec joie toutes les nouvelles connaissances pouvant nous aider à cerner le problème.

Nancy Gnaedinger, conseillère en gérontologie, les mauvais traitements à l'égard des aînés; brève vue d'ensemble de la nature et de l'étendue du problème

Définissons d'abord ce qu'on entend par mauvais traitements à l'égard des aînés. Il s'agit du «tort causé par une personne à un adulte vulnérable, principalement ou en partie, en raison de son âge. Les mauvais traitements ne se limitent pas à la violence physique, il peut aussi s'agir de violence psychologique ou d'exploitation financière, de négligence ou de manque de soins».

L'exploitation des aînés comporte les mêmes caractéristiques que les autres formes de violence familiale (isolement, déséquilibre de pouvoir, dépendance financière, ressources familiales limitées, toxicomanie, psychopathologie, faible estime de soi, préjugés sexistes), mais elle est aussi différente à cause des caractéristiques de la vieillesse, du renversement de la situation de dépendance, du manque de soutien par les pairs et parce que la «famille» est souvent considérée comme une institution.

Les abus dont sont victimes les aînés constituent un problème particulier au Canada, parce que la population âgée croît de façon exponentielle par rapport aux autres groupes d'âge. Les statistiques révèlent que de 4 à 10 p. 100 des aînés sont victimes de mauvais traitements. La victime est habituellement une femme et la personne qui inflige les mauvais traitements est un fils ou une fille qui a peut-être été victime de violence pendant son enfance ou l'époux de la victime. Les aînés vivant dans un établissement peuvent aussi être victimes de mauvais traitements de la part d'autres résidents ou des préposés aux soins.

En dépit des variables de la problématique, on retrouve tout de même certaines constantes. Les femmes âgées dépendantes, par exemple, sont plus susceptibles d'être victimes de mauvais traitements que les hommes. La situation est intolérable et, dans bien des cas, il s'agit d'un comportement criminel. Comment réagissons-nous à ce problème? Nous y répondons en traitant de la situation, en partageant nos connaissances du sujet et en s'inspirant d'un même dynamisme dans la recherche de solutions communes.

Thème I: Étendue et nature de la violence familiale – Discussions de groupe et recommandations

«Nous sommes tous potentiellement coupables[1].»

«L'abus de pouvoir et un désir démesuré d'influencer la vie des gens sont la source de toute violence.»

En général, tous les groupes sont d'accord pour dire que bien que ce soient les femmes, les enfants et les personnes âgées qui sont les premières victimes de mauvais traitements, il y a néanmoins en chacun de nous un potentiel de violence. La société patriarcale a été identifiée comme étant la principale cause de la violence familiale, parce qu'elle divise la société en nantis et en démunis, en puissants et en impuissants. Les règles et les valeurs, la pornographie, les messages des médias, la compétition et le processus de socialisation renforcent la cause première de la violence.

D'autres facteurs sont associés à ce problème important: la pauvreté, la toxicomanie, les stéréotypes sexuels, la prédisposition à la dépendance et la dépendance économique.

Pour nous attaquer au problème de la violence, il faut élargir notre façon d'aborder cette question. Beaucoup pensent que nous devrions adopter une approche féministe. Quoi qu'il en soit, il nous faut avant tout changer notre perception de la famille.

La famille ne peut plus être perçue comme un havre de paix ne comptant que des personnes bienveillantes, pas plus qu'on ne peut lui imposer des structures «nucléaires» artificielles. Les familles sont ce qu'elles sont, et les politiques, les initiatives et les programmes doivent tenir compte de la composition des diverses familles et avoir comme objectif principal de permettre aux gens de vivre sans violence. Quoique l'étiquette «à risque» a une connotation qui frise la condescendance, il y a effectivement des groupes qui sont beaucoup plus vulnérables: les femmes, les enfants, les personnes âgées, les personnes handicapées, les autochtones, les personnes isolées, les préposés aux soins, les enfants de la rue et les détenus.

Il faut faire des études sur la violence. Il est également important d'étudier la famille non violente, les systèmes communautaires et sociaux, les attitudes et les valeurs qui perpétuent la violence et les formes de violence autres que la violence physique. Le gouvernement fédéral devrait accorder une plus grande importance à la recherche et toutes les études devraient être diffusées à l'échelle nationale.

Pour les peuples autochtones, la dépendance crée un contexte propice à la violence dans la famille et cet état est peut-être aggravé par le fait que les collectivités autochtones ne peuvent pas participer activement à l'élaboration de solutions adaptées à leur culture et à leurs collectivités.

Les personnes handicapées nécessitent une attention plus soutenue et il est nécessaire que ceux qui leur fournissent des soins deviennent pour eux une deuxième famille.

«Il n'y a aucune raison pour qu'on fasse sentir à une personne qu'elle a moins d'importance pour la société, sous prétexte qu'elle a 70 ou 75 ans.»

Les personnes âgées qui subissent des mauvais traitements sont victimes de violence, de négligence et d'infantilisme affectif de la part de leurs partenaires, leurs familles, des préposés aux soins et du personnel des établissements. De plus en plus, les personnes manquant d'autonomie physique et/ou économique sont victimes de violence. La crainte que soit découvert leur comportement violent passé envers leurs enfants, l'effritement des liens familiaux et la peur d'être placées en institution accroissent la vulnérabilité des personnes âgées. Finalement, le droit et la capacité des personnes âgées de prendre leurs propres décisions doivent être respectés.

Non seulement les groupes ethnoculturels ne définissent-ils pas la famille en fonction du stéréotype de la structure nucléaire, mais ils font face à des obstacles comme la langue qui les empêchent d'avoir accès à l'information, aux services, aux ressources et, finalement, aux possibilités de contrer la violence. Il nous faut tenir compte de la culture des diverses collectivités ethniques pour améliorer l'accès aux services et à l'information.

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[1] Les citations (en caractère gras) incluses dans les notes des discussions et des recommandations de groupe ont été formulées par des participants anonymes.

Comme les femmes immigrantes, les femmes en milieu rural et dans les collectivités éloignées sont doublement désavantagées, parce qu'elles sont isolées et qu'on ne comprend pas leur vécu ni leurs besoins. Il faudrait évaluer si les politiques et les projets de recherche sont adaptés aux besoins de ces groupes.

Thème II: Éducation du public, des professionnels et des travailleurs – Dîner-conférence

Rix Rogers, conseiller spécial du ministre de la Santé nationale et du Bien-être social en matière d'agression sexuelle à l'égard des enfants

Je travaille comme conseiller spécial du ministre de la Santé nationale et du Bien-être social depuis septembre 1987 et mon mandat se termine en septembre 1989. Ma vie a été profondément marquée par les expériences des deux dernières années.

Quand j'ai accédé à mes fonctions, je ne me doutais pas de l'ampleur de l'exploitation sexuelle des enfants au Canada, et j'avais donc certains préjugés. J'ai voyagé dans tout le pays pour rencontrer le plus d'intervenants possible: environ 75 ministres de différents gouvernements, des travailleurs de corps policiers et de milieux hospitaliers, des procureurs de la Couronne, des juges, des travailleurs de première ligne, des éducateurs, des thérapeutes, des victimes, des agresseurs, des parents non incriminés, des dirigeants de petites villes et de collectivités autochtones, des travailleurs dans des établissements, des associations professionnelles, et la liste continue. J'ai rencontré environ 1600 personnes. J'avais d'abord imaginé, bien naïvement, qu'il s'agissait d'un problème sérieux, mais limité. Toutefois un tel postulat n'a pas résisté au temps.

J'ai été touché et choqué par la douleur et l'angoisse des victimes de violence familiale et celles de personnes qui sont maltraitées par des individus en autorité. Les préposés aux soins sont, en général, extraordinaires, mais il y en a qui manquent de sensibilité et de compassion, n'ayant pas reçu de formation sur les réalités et les symptômes des abus sexuels à l'égard des enfants.

J'ai la conviction que l'ensemble de la société et des institutions responsables doivent passer à l'action et s'engager moralement dans une lutte à long terme contre l'exploitation sexuelle des enfants, avant que des milliers de vies ne soient ruinées.

J'ai constaté certaines choses durant tous mes déplacements: les besoins et les contributions des collectivités éloignées, rurales, autochtones et immigrantes sont particuliers; les groupes de professionnels ne reconnaissent pas que l'exploitation des enfants est répandue et ils n'agissent pas en chefs de file; la formation professionnelle générale n'est plus suffisante; nous n'utilisons pas assez les approches multidisciplinaires; nous sous-estimons l'importance des paraprofessionnels qualifiés; et nous n'écoutons pas ce que les gens nous disent.

On offre de la formation en plusieurs endroits et le mouvement prend de l'ampleur. Mais nous devons aussi porter notre attention et nos efforts sur l'éducation de la population, les attitudes et les valeurs sociales relatives à la sexualité masculine et féminine, sur le processus de socialisation et les messages qu'il véhicule, sur la pornographie, et sur notre besoin d'une société égalitaire où tous les hommes et les femmes pourraient vivre ensemble, nonobstant des considérations d'ordre culturel, social ou géographique.

Pour qu'une telle osmose se réalise, il nous faut une vision de l'avenir qui nous unit et nous stimule. La société patriarcale a conditionné les hommes à être des prédateurs sexuels et les femmes des victimes, mais nous pouvons transformer cela en nous efforçant d'adopter de nouvelles valeurs et attitudes.

Bien que les gouvernements, les organismes et les professionnels aient un rôle important à jouer, les changements les plus importants commencent dans l'âme des individus. Chacun d'entre nous peut dès maintenant, dans son milieu, contribuer à préparer un avenir meilleur pour nos enfants. Il faut y réfléchir sérieusement. C'est dès maintenant qu'il faut agir! Dieu nous aide!

Thème II: Éducation du public, des professionnels et des travailleurs – Discussions de groupe et recommandations

«La violence est le cancer de la société. Nous pouvons l'observer et l'étudier, ou prendre un bistouri et en finir avec elle.»

Pour pallier le manque d'information de la population, il faudrait organiser des campagnes de sensibilisation et d'éducation dans les médias et élaborer des programmes de formation à l'aide des collectivités, du gouvernement, du secteur privé et des médias. Il faudrait accorder à ces programmes un financement à long terme si l'on veut changer les valeurs qui tendent à encourager et à perpétuer la violence. Ces programmes devraient aussi mieux faire connaître les services existants.

S'adressant aux victimes, aux contrevenants, aux enfants, aux parents, aux familles, aux hommes, aux professionnels et aux hommes politiques, les messages véhiculés dans ces campagnes et ces programmes de formation devraient insister sur le caractère criminel des comportements violents, mettre en évidence l'omniprésence du problème de la violence familiale et s'attaquer aux croyances et aux attitudes bien ancrées sur l'abus de pouvoir et le désir de domination en tant que cause première du problème.

Des programmes importants (comme les campagnes sur l'alcool au volant, l'usage abusif de drogues et l'usage du tabac) devraient être élaborés en insistant sur les droits et les responsabilités de chacun en matière de violence familiale. Pour que ces programmes soient efficaces, appropriés et adaptés aux besoins des gens, ils devraient être coordonnés, planifiés et implantés dans tout le pays par les collectivités elles-mêmes.

Des moyens d'éducation et de formation devraient être fournis aux professionnels et aux travailleurs de façon continue; une telle approche devrait s'inspirer d'un concept multidisciplinaire et tenir compte des connaissances, des besoins et de l'expérience des victimes et des travailleurs de première ligne. Les juges, policiers, avocats de la défense, procureurs de la Couronne, enseignants, médecins et les personnes travaillant dans le milieu correctionnel devraient aussi pouvoir bénéficier d'une telle formation. On devrait chercher à rejoindre et à sensibiliser tout particulièrement les juges et les médecins. Le gouvernement fédéral devrait établir des programmes de formation et s'assurer de leur accessibilité à travers tout le pays. L'importance et la pertinence des comités de coordination communautaires collent à la réalité des cinq thèmes identifiés.

Dans les milieux autochtones, la formation et l'éducation devraient être orientées sur la collectivité, être offertes par des autochtones, dans la langue autochtone, et devraient transmettre des valeurs et des concepts qui sont propres à leur culture. À Alkali Lake, par exemple, les autochtones ont pris le problème en main et élaboré des solutions adaptées à la collectivité. Cette approche pourrait servir de modèle aux collectivités non autochtones.

La population et les professionnels demandent un meilleur accès aux programmes d'éducation qui donnent des personnes handicapées une autre image que celle de personnes en fauteuil roulant, accentuant ainsi la grande vulnérabilité des femmes handicapées.

Non seulement les personnes âgées, mais aussi les préposés aux soins, dans les établissements et dans les maisons, devraient avoir accès à des programmes de sensibilisation, de formation et d'éducation sur la question des mauvais traitements envers les personnes âgées.

Il faut trouver de nouvelles approches pour changer les modèles culturels de la société canadienne. Il est essentiel d'informer les immigrants ou ceux désireux de l'être lorsqu'ils se présentent aux consulats, ambassades, écoles, médias et centres communautaires. De même, il faudrait établir des programmes dans les langues des diverses collectivités, former les travailleurs aux diverses cultures et permettre aux étudiants des groupes ethnoculturels d'adhérer aux professions qui sont en relation avec la violence familiale.

On doit accorder des subventions plus importantes aux programmes d'études et de formation s'adressant aux collectivités rurales et éloignées, et il faut tenir compte des limites et du caractère particulier de la prestation de soins en régions éloignées, lors de l'élaboration de ces programmes.

Thème III: Prévention de la violence familiale et protection des personnes à risque – Discours de banquet

M^{me} Kim Campbell, ministre d'État aux Affaires indiennes

La violence familiale est un problème envahissant, bien que caché, qui touche les femmes, les hommes et les enfants, de génération en génération, quel que soit leur âge, leur race, leur religion ou leur niveau de vie économique, et elle se manifeste dans un milieu que nous croyions sûr, la famille. Ceci vaut aussi pour les collectivités autochtones.

Bien que les femmes autochtones représentent seulement 2 p. 100 environ de toute la population féminine du Canada, 15 p. 100 des femmes qui ont demandé de l'aide à une maison de transition en 1985 étaient des autochtones. Les peuples autochtones ont subi des tensions très particulières: obligation de résider loin de la réserve pour étudier, bouleversement culturel, méfiance de la part des travailleurs des centres d'aide d'urgence qui comprenaient mal la culture des collectivités avec lesquelles ils travaillaient, et lutte pour l'affirmation d'une identité culturelle essentielle à l'estime de soi.

Pour s'attaquer aux besoins particuliers des autochtones, le ministère d'État aux Affaires indiennes et du Nord dépensera un million de dollars par année jusqu'en 1992, par l'entremise de la Direction générale des services médicaux de Santé et Bien-être social. Un montant additionnel de 400 000 $ par année jusqu'en 1991 sera affecté au programme de lutte contre les abus sexuels à l'égard des enfants et, grâce à l'«Opération Refuge», de la SCHL, on trouvera dans les réserves plus de maisons d'hébergement pour les femmes autochtones et leurs enfants. Le gouvernement fédéral est déterminé à trouver des solutions au problème de la violence familiale et nous devons persévérer. Je vous remercie de votre participation et de votre intérêt pour ce problème social extrêmement important.

Thème III: Prévention de la violence familiale et protection des personnes à risque – Exposés des spécialistes

Lorraine Berzins, Conseil des églises pour la justice et la criminologie: «Prévention de la violence familiale; sexualité, spiritualité et sérendipité»

Je travaille pour un groupe d'églises chrétiennes et je tiens à déclarer dès le début que l'église est en grande partie responsable du problème de la violence familiale et du silence qui entoure ce sujet. Nous nous sommes posé de sérieuses questions à cet égard: **Comment avons-nous pu permettre une telle situation? Pourquoi avons-nous toléré une telle condition sociale pendant si longtemps? Comment avons-nous pu croire que c'était acceptable?** La pénible réalité qui s'offre à nous, c'est que toute notre société, toute notre organisation économique et toutes nos vies personnelles doivent être corrigées.

Nous avons publié un document pour aider les gens ordinaires à mieux comprendre les données du problème (*Family Violence in a Patriarchal Culture: A Challenge to Our Way of Living*, Conseil des églises pour la justice et la criminologie, Ottawa, 1988).

Les peuples autochtones doivent se rendre compte qu'ils devront réapprendre à vivre en tant que collectivité. Le problème de la violence familiale est enraciné dans un ensemble de valeurs qui a prise sur nous tous, et nous devons, tous ensemble, à l'échelle du pays, prendre conscience de la situation. Nous devons remettre en question la hiérarchie du pouvoir et l'éthique de la domination comme moyens de maintenir l'«ordre» social dans nos institutions publiques, nos organismes, nos familles et nos relations humaines.

Nous devons nous interroger sur nos propres valeurs, notre famille, nos responsabilités, ce que nous voulons, ce que nous faisons ou ne faisons pas, en tant que parent, laïc ou membre du clergé, homme politique, gestionnaire, employé ou décideur. Il existe de nombreuses façons peu coûteuses d'aller chercher de l'information: la participation à des ateliers de sensibilisation par exemple.

Au cours des discussions de ce matin, je vous engage à terminer la phrase suivante: Je ne crois pas que la violence familiale soit assez importante pour qu'il vaille la peine de modifier le fonctionnement du gouvernement parce que... Je crois que cet exercice pourrait nous en apprendre beaucoup sur notre conception de ce problème.

Eunadie Johnson, directrice générale, Thompson Crisis Centre, Manitoba

Deux événements survenus récemment m'ont amenée à modifier non pas ce que je voulais vous dire aujourd'hui, mais l'orientation de mon exposé. Le premier événement: les meurtres brutaux de Mary Ann Reid et de ses deux jeunes fils à Winnipeg, le 10 juin 1989. Le deuxième: un appel que nous avons reçu d'une personne-ressource qui travaille dans une petite collectivité au nord de Thompson et qui voulait nous envoyer une femme battue. Cette femme était accompagnée de ses 10 enfants (âgés de 1 à 12 ans).

Dans le premier cas, même si les membres de la collectivité (les voisins, la police) savaient que le mari battait sa femme et ses enfants, aucun geste concret n'avait été fait, dans ce «joli quartier aux pelouses bien entretenues». Pourquoi n'insistons-nous pas sur le fait que la violence familiale est un problème qui touche toute la collectivité et qui ne doit pas être toléré? Pourquoi ne pas protéger les femmes et les enfants dans le cadre des programmes de «Protection de quartier», de la même façon dont nous protégeons nos propriétés? Qu'attendons-nous?

Vous croyez que je suis en colère? Vous avez raison. Cette année, au Manitoba, neuf femmes ont été tuées par leur conjoint. Les femmes avec qui je travaille sont extrêmement tendues. Elles ont peur, pour elles-mêmes, pour les femmes qui vivent dans les maisons d'hébergement et pour les femmes qui n'ont pas accès à ces maisons.

Prenons le cas de la femme avec ses dix enfants. Comment une collectivité ne peut-elle pas reconnaître qu'il serait plus simple de retirer l'agresseur de son foyer et de former un cercle d'entraide pour offrir une protection à la femme? Qu'est-ce-que la collectivité aurait pu faire pour cette femme?

J'estime qu'il est ridicule de déraciner onze personnes lorsque le seul responsable du crime est libre de circuler à sa guise.

La prévention de la violence et la protection des personnes à risque sont indissociables, car lorsqu'on prévient la violence, on protège aussi les personnes à risque. Les personnes qui savent que des hommes battent leur conjointe ou d'autres personnes sans défense (des enfants ou des personnes âgées), devraient dénoncer et condamner cet état de chose. Les maisons d'hébergement ont besoin de fonds pour éduquer les collectivités. Les centres de traitement des agresseurs doivent évaluer le succès du traitement et doivent communiquer avec les maisons d'hébergement qui accueillent les femmes pour faire part des changements de comportement de l'agresseur.

Je vous parlerai maintenant, en m'inspirant de ma propre expérience personnelle, du problème de la violence envers les femmes de race noire. En plus d'être confrontées au sexisme, ces femmes sont victimes de racisme. Dans certains cas, les mouvements de femmes ont tendance à romancer l'expérience des femmes noires plutôt que de parler de l'impact négatif de cette oppression. Si on croit que les femmes noires sont fortes malgré cette oppression dont elles sont victimes, c'est qu'on ne connaît pas beaucoup leur vécu. Être fort devant l'oppression n'est pas la même chose que venir à bout de l'oppression. Nous ne sommes pas une «question à étudier», nous sommes une «clientèle». Lorsqu'on parle de prestation de services, il faut tenir compte des besoins des gens des diverses cultures. Il faut appliquer les lois de la même façon pour les autochtones que pour les blancs. L'élément essentiel qu'il faut considérer est l'intensité de la violence.

Comme une somme de 40 millions de dollars sera affectée à la lutte contre la violence familiale, j'ai l'impression que tous les psychiatres soumettront une demande pour obtenir des fonds pour la recherche. Et les femmes qui travaillent dans les maisons d'hébergement? Ne voyez-vous pas que le but premier de ces maisons est d'offrir des services d'éducation et de prévention?

Si j'ai accepté de prendre la parole ici aujourd'hui, c'est pour trois raisons: pour vous renseigner, pour appuyer la cause des femmes et, bien sûr, pour protester contre les injustices. Je veux vous dire ce que signifie d'être un intervenant de première ligne, vous dire combien notre tâche est importante, de façon à ce que vous compreniez que c'est nous qui sommes les spécialistes et les professionnels. Je veux me faire la porte-parole des femmes, des enfants et des personnes âgées qui sont maltraités et qui nous demandent de mettre un terme à la violence. Je veux protester, et je protesterai toujours, aussi longtemps que le capitalisme, le racisme, le sexisme et tous les mots en «isme» contribueront à favoriser la violence contre les femmes. Nous nous devons de protester, parce que des femmes comme Mary Ann Reid et leurs enfants meurent de la violence.

Jillian Ridington, chercheuse, Réseau d'action des femmes handicapées du Canada (DAWN)

À sa première réunion, il y a quatre ans, DAWN Canada a établi que la violence à l'égard des femmes handicapées était une question primordiale, pourtant le sujet était ignoré par le mouvement des femmes et par le mouvement des consommateurs handicapés. En 1988, dans le cadre d'un projet de DAWN qui avait pour objectif l'étude des besoins des femmes canadiennes handicapées, nous avons découvert les faits suivants: 40 p. 100 des répondantes avaient été violées, maltraitées ou agressées; 64 p. 100 avaient été victimes de violence verbale; les jeunes filles souffrant d'un handicap ont moins de chances d'échapper à la violence; 53 p. 100 des répondantes handicapées à la naissance ou qui l'étaient devenues durant leur enfance avaient été maltraitées; les femmes handicapées ont difficilement accès aux services offerts aux victimes d'actes de violence; les femmes souffrant de handicaps multiples avaient été maltraitées plus souvent que les autres.

Il est important de noter que les répondantes et les femmes interrogées (au total 245) ont été rejointes par l'intermédiaire des chapitres locaux de DAWN et d'autres groupes de personnes handicapées, de centres de femmes et d'organismes travaillant auprès de personnes handicapées, et qu'elles sont probablement représentatives de la population des femmes handicapées.

Selon le rapport Badgley, une femme sur deux est victime d'actes sexuels non désirés durant sa vie. Sur quatre femmes sur cinq qui sont molestées, la première agression est survenue avant l'âge de 18 ans. La recherche à laquelle je travaille actuellement indique que les chances qu'une fillette passe son enfance sans être victime de violence sont plus élevées pour les filles handicapées.

L'une des raisons sous-jacentes aux actes de violence est qu'il existe beaucoup d'occasions. On apprend à la fille souffrant d'un handicap à être docile, leur mère se sent responsable de leur état et la fille est plus susceptible de s'attacher à son père. Les personnes handicapées sont vulnérables aussi aux attouchements non désirés parce qu'elles sont mal informées et qu'elles ont besoin de contacts physiques jusqu'à un âge plus avancé que les autres.

Les handicaps multiples rendent les personnes encore plus vulnérables, selon l'étude de DAWN. Soixante répondantes souffraient de deux types de handicap (ex. handicap moteur et handicap visuel, ou trouble du développement et handicap auditif). Vingt-sept d'entre elles (45 p. 100) avaient été maltraitées, violées ou agressées. Treize femmes souffraient de trois types de handicap; parmi elles, huit avaient été victimes de violence. Seulement trois femmes souffraient de plus de trois types de handicap et elles avaient toutes été victimes de violence.

Qui sont les agresseurs des femmes? Ce sont le mari, l'ex-mari, les amis, les parents, les préposés aux soins, les voisins et la parenté. Trente-sept pour cent des femmes avaient été victimes de violence conjugale, 15 p. 100 avaient été maltraitées par des parents, et 28 p. 100 avaient été agressées par un étranger. Il est très difficile pour ces femmes de dénoncer les actes de violence dont elles ont été victimes, à cause de la peur, de la dépendance, de la crainte de ne pas être crues et du manque d'accessibilité aux services comme les maisons d'hébergement et les centres d'aide aux victimes de viol. Lorsqu'elles ont accès à ces services, elles les utilisent.

Pour les femmes qui vivent en établissement, les femmes qui dépendent des autres pour leurs soins personnels et les femmes qui n'ont pas reçu d'éducation à la sexualité, la question du consentement est aléatoire. Il peut leur paraître impossible d'opposer un refus à une personne dont elles dépendent affectivement, financièrement et physiquement. Le véritable consentement doit être fondé sur la connaissance des faits; les femmes handicapées doivent être informées de leurs droits. Elles doivent être protégées contre les mauvais traitements et les agressions sexuelles. Toutefois, nous ne devons pas leur refuser le droit d'apprécier et d'exprimer leur sexualité. Ce droit leur a été trop souvent refusé par les pratiques médicales (stérilisation) et la loi (interdiction d'activités sexuelles consensuelles; disposition abrogée en 1983).

La société a la responsabilité d'empêcher que les personnes handicapées subissent de mauvais traitements et de protéger celles qui ont été victimes d'actes de violence. Tous les services d'intervention d'urgence, de consultation et les services juridiques qui sont offerts aux femmes et aux enfants maltraités doivent être aussi disponibles aux femmes et enfants handicapés. Nous ne connaîtrons jamais la véritable étendue de la violence contre les femmes handicapées ni même de la violence à l'égard des femmes en général si nous ne leur offrons pas la possibilité de fuir cette violence et de vivre en sécurité, sans souffrance et sans humiliation.

Thème III: Prévention de la violence familiale et protection des personnes à risque – Discussions de groupe et recommandations

«La violence est inacceptable.»

«Nous devons condamner la violence.»

«Nous avons la responsabilité de créer un environnement sûr et bienveillant pour tous les membres de la société.»

On a identifié trois types de stratégies de prévention de la violence familiale: la prévention primaire, qui consiste à prévenir véritablement la violence; les mesures secondaires, qui consistent à empêcher que les actes de violence ne se reproduisent; et les mesures tertiaires, qui consistent à aider les victimes à surmonter les conséquences de la violence qu'elles ont subie.

La prévention doit se faire non seulement au niveau des familles, mais aussi au niveau des établissements. On s'inquiète du fait que «actuellement, nous réparons les dommages plutôt que de faire de la prévention».

Dans toute stratégie de prévention, il faut tenir compte d'un besoin de redéfinir nos propres valeurs, nos attitudes et nos comportements pour en arriver à considérer les femmes, les enfants et les personnes âgées comme des individus à part entière qui ont le droit à la dignité, à la sécurité et à l'égalité.

Conformément à une orientation nationale, les programmes de prévention communautaires devraient voir la violence comme l'aboutissement de notre société patriarcale; tenir compte des priorités régionales; être mis en place à l'échelle nationale; et mettre à contribution plusieurs groupes d'intervenants selon une approche holistique. Ainsi sera-t-il possible de croire à une éradication de la violence.

Une stratégie de prévention globale doit comprendre la contribution plus active des membres de la collectivité, la sensibilisation et l'éducation de la population. Nous devons sensibiliser la population au fait que nous vivons dans une société violente et que cela est inacceptable. Il est particulièrement important que ces messages parviennent aux décideurs, aux églises, aux enfants, aux professionnels, aux travailleurs, aux clientèles spéciales, aux médias et aux collectivités.

En matière de protection, il nous faut tenir compte de l'importance de fournir un soutien à ceux qui prennent soin des personnes à leur charge, de permettre aux victimes d'exprimer leurs besoins et les expériences qu'elles ont vécues, d'identifier les contrevenants qui continuent de travailler dans des établissements, de travailler ensemble de façon concertée et organisée, de faire appliquer les lois de façon efficace, de dénoncer les cas de violence, de retirer l'agresseur du foyer familial (Thème IV) et de fournir des logements à long terme et à des prix abordables aux femmes et aux enfants qui cherchent un refuge.

On a identifié comme pierre angulaire de la prévention, la coordination entre le gouvernement fédéral et les gouvernements des provinces et des territoires. On a aussi mentionné le fait que le financement fluctue selon l'intérêt que le public porte à une question, et cette situation crée un fardeau énorme pour les services locaux qui ont un réel besoin de ressources. Non seulement a-t-on besoin de fonds pour de nouveaux programmes, mais les services qui existent ne disposent que de maigres ressources. Il faudrait rationaliser les méthodes et les critères de financement pour alléger la charge de travail des services locaux.

On a pressé les entreprises d'examiner leurs propres initiatives et programmes de gestion (ex. les programmes d'aide aux employés) et de chercher des moyens de promouvoir la prévention et la sensibilisation.

Le gouvernement fédéral devrait jouer un rôle de premier plan en matière de violence familiale en unissant ses efforts à ceux des gouvernements provinciaux et territoriaux, des organismes non gouvernementaux nationaux, provinciaux, territoriaux, régionaux et locaux, des services et des comités locaux et du secteur privé. Le Centre national d'information sur la violence dans la famille pourrait recueillir et distribuer dans tout le pays les résultats de recherches, des documents de formation et des listes de programmes communautaires.

Les politiques de prévention et de protection relatives aux collectivités autochtones devraient être conçues et implantées par ces dernières. Ces politiques devraient reconnaître le fait qu'il y a de nombreux autochtones vivant à l'extérieur des réserves et que leurs besoins ne

sont pas comblés par le financement qui est accordé aux réserves.

Étant donné la vulnérabilité des personnes âgées aux actes de violence pouvant être commis dans les familles et ailleurs, il *ne faut pas les oublier* dans l'élaboration des stratégies de prévention et de protection.

Contribution des entreprises et la violence familiale

Introduction

Jacques Langevin, directeur général, Avon Canada

Vous vous demandez peut-être pourquoi la compagnie Avon est représentée ici aujourd'hui, pourquoi nous avons tenu à participer à la conférence? Si je suis ici, c'est que notre entreprise a à coeur de répondre aux besoins, aux désirs et aux aspirations des femmes, en tant que clientes et employées. Nous estimons que nous devons augmenter notre engagement social et nous considérons que cette conférence nous offre un bon point de départ.

Je suis aussi ici pour deux autres raisons. La première est pour voir de quelle façon nous pouvons aider. Après avoir examiné l'horaire très chargé de cette semaine et écouté les discours de la séance plénière et les discussions au sein de mon groupe, je peux vous affirmer que l'expérience a été très instructive et profitable et, franchement, qu'elle donne à réfléchir. La seconde raison de ma présence est d'offrir un soutien tangible. Pourquoi?

Eh bien, parce que je crois que nous sommes sensibilisés aux questions en cause et nous estimons que d'autres groupes devraient aussi participer à l'élimination de toutes les formes de violence. Il est crucial que les membres du secteur privé s'unissent aux gouvernements et aux intervenants bénévoles, car la violence conjugale, les mauvais traitements à l'égard des enfants et la violence à l'égard des personnes âgées sont présents pratiquement partout. Nous devons nous faire davantage confiance et travailler en collaboration. Je crois que beaucoup d'entreprises s'intéressent à la question, il faudrait simplement qu'elles soient mieux informées.

Dans le domaine de l'éducation, Avon Canada estime qu'elle peut apporter sa contribution. En effet, nous avons l'intention de distribuer les résultats de vos travaux, sous forme de document synthèse, à 750 entreprises importantes du pays. C'est une première étape. Nous serions heureux de travailler de concert avec le ministère de la Santé nationale et du Bien-être social pour voir de quelle autre façon nous pourrions aider à mobiliser d'autres groupes. Je vous remercie de votre attention.

Dîner-conférence

Rita Karakas, directrice générale, YWCA du Canada

Je veux vous parler aujourd'hui de la collaboration du secteur bénévole, du secteur gouvernemental et du secteur privé.

La «violence familiale» est un euphémisme administratif dont on se sert pour parler des *femmes* et des filles battues, violentées et maltraitées. Je ne nie pas qu'il y ait de la violence conjugale, de la violence envers les personnes âgées ou envers les garçons, mais je n'accepterai pas de nier la réalité: les femmes sont les principales victimes.

Les ennemis, ce ne sont pas les hommes. Ce ne sont pas les entreprises. Ce n'est pas le gouvernement fédéral. Il n'y a pas d'ennemis dans cette affaire. Il n'y a que des gens dans les collectivités qui ne reconnaissent pas les droits des autres, qui ne reconnaissent pas les intérêts communs et les façons de travailler ensemble.

Grâce à des contacts avec le secteur bénévole, les entreprises et le gouvernement ont découvert que les gens qui se rassemblent pour apporter des changements dans les collectivités font plus, beaucoup plus rapidement et avec beaucoup d'énergie. Plus il y a de participants, plus nous avons de chances de trouver des solutions. Mais il nous faut nous connaître les uns les autres.

Les maisons d'hébergement, les programmes de garderie et d'équité salariale doivent figurer dans les politiques ministérielles et les politiques des entreprises, puisque les femmes constituent l'élément principal de l'économie du marché du travail. Mais les femmes doivent approcher les entreprises et les gouvernements avec une attitude forte et un sentiment d'égalité, et non simplement pour demander de l'argent. Pour déterminer qui sont leurs partenaires, elles peuvent se fonder sur les politiques de prêt, d'embauche et d'investissement des employeurs. Elles doivent exiger des entreprises qu'elles offrent des programmes d'aide aux employés, qu'elles distribuent des documents d'éducation et qu'elles organisent des séminaires afin de sensibiliser leurs employés aux besoins des femmes et des agresseurs.

Il faut faire participer le secteur privé. L'époque des ventes de pâtisseries et des bingos est révolue. Nous devons créer des coalitions dans chacune de nos collectivités. C'est à ce niveau que nous pouvons changer quelque chose. Le gouvernement fédéral n'est pas considéré comme une entreprise, mais c'est l'employeur qui engage le plus de femmes au pays et nous devons exiger qu'il donne l'exemple.

Je crois que nous tous ici présents représentons la population du Canada, et cela inclut les entreprises. Nous représentons tous les Canadiens. Laissons tomber nos étiquettes et regardons ce que nous pouvons faire. Nous le devons bien à nos soeurs et à nos filles. Je vous remercie de votre attention.

Thème IV: Interventions et poursuites judiciaires dans les cas de violence familiale – Dîner-conférence

Ian Glen, Sous-solliciteur général adjoint, Direction de la police et de la sécurité

Comme le système de justice pénale est semé d'embûches, je crois que vous serez d'accord avec moi pour dire qu'il est effectivement *possible* d'y apporter des innovations qui auront une incidence *considérable* sur la réduction de la violence familiale.

Il peut être trompeur de parler de *système*, étant donné la complexité de cette entité. Parlons plutôt d'un réseau d'individus qui cherchent un but commun: une société libérée des ravages causés par le crime. En ce sens, tous ceux qui sont ici présents font partie du système de justice pénale.

Comment le système de justice pénale peut-il concilier la protection de la victime, la condamnation de l'infraction par la société et la valeur positive que nous accordons à la famille? La police devrait-elle changer la façon dont elle répond à la violence familiale? La déjudiciarisation, après la mise en accusation, est-elle l'approche la meilleure? Quelles sont les solutions de rechange à la pratique traditionnelle qui consiste à imposer une peine? Les tribunaux ont-ils le pouvoir d'obliger quelqu'un à suivre un traitement? Comment pouvons-nous améliorer les traitements offerts aux contrevenants? Voilà quelques-unes des questions auxquelles nous devons répondre aujourd'hui.

Dans le domaine correctionnel, nous élaborons présentement des modèles de traitement efficaces pour les contrevenants. Nous voulons absolument briser le cycle de la violence. En tant que police, nous cherchons des moyens nouveaux de desservir la collectivité.

Qui peut blâmer les victimes d'être peu disposées à soumettre leur angoisse personnelle à l'examen minutieux du système de justice pénale? Nous nous sommes rendu compte que la police peut aider à trouver des solutions au crime dans la collectivité. Toutefois, si les membres de la collectivité n'apportent pas leur collaboration, les problèmes sociaux menant au crime demeureront sans solution. Il doit y avoir concertation.

Selon certaines données, la politique nationale de mise en accusation dans les cas de violence conjugale décourage les victimes de dénoncer la situation ou favorise les récidives. Si nous voulons répondre aux besoins des victimes, il nous faut réfléchir à ce qui se passe après qu'une accusation *criminelle* est portée. L'intervention de la police doit être soutenue par des services aux victimes, des programmes de formation et de sensibilisation dans la collectivité et des programmes de traitement pour les agresseurs. Toutefois, dans de nombreuses collectivités du Canada, ces services n'existent pas.

Bien qu'il faut souvent trouver rapidement des solutions à des problèmes urgents, nous devons aussi élaborer des stratégies de prévention à long terme. La formation des professionnels et l'éducation du public constituent des priorités à l'échelle nationale, mais c'est *uniquement grâce à la prévention que nous parviendrons à briser le cycle de la violence familiale*. Je vous remercie de votre attention.

Thème IV: Interventions et poursuites judiciaires dans les cas de violence familiale – Discussions de groupe et recommandations

«Comme individus, nous déléguons aux institutions les tâches que nous ne désirons pas accomplir nous-mêmes. Nous devons collaborer avec elles et leur confier un rôle approprié.»

«Le défi est de trouver une façon de collaborer avec le système juridique pour bâtir un monde meilleur et d'instaurer et de mettre au point un processus de dialogue complet qui nous permette d'unir nos efforts. Tous les secteurs de la collectivité doivent être représentés. Il nous faut créer des comités consultatifs mixtes à tous les niveaux: au niveau des organismes, des comtés, ainsi qu'aux niveaux municipal, provincial et fédéral.»

«Comment réagir au fait que les femmes qui ont signalé leur cas au système juridique ont déclaré, tel que l'ont montré les recherches, qu'elles ne le feraient pas une deuxième fois, car le prix était trop élevé?»

Lors de l'élaboration de lignes directrices détaillées sur les interventions possibles du système de justice pénale, les groupes de participants se sont surtout penchés sur les besoins et les expériences des victimes, des contrevenants et des intervenants.

On reconnaît que ce système ne permet pas d'enrayer toute la violence, mais on estime qu'il peut par ailleurs renforcer la convention sociale selon laquelle la violence est un acte criminel.

L'inefficacité et l'utilisation à mauvais escient des services de médiation ont fait l'objet de critiques. En outre, le Code criminel ne permet pas de s'attaquer aux formes de mauvais traitements autres que la violence physique. Des facteurs comme les délais de mise en accusation et le chevauchement des dispositions prévues au droit civil, au droit pénal et au droit de la famille peuvent miner la capacité des victimes de mettre fin aux mauvais traitements et avoir pour ces personnes des conséquences secondaires négatives. Il faut mettre sur pied des programmes communautaires d'aide aux victimes et aux témoins; leurs services et leur structure ont été décrits.

«Nous ne disposerons jamais de tous les fonds nécessaires pour mettre en prison toutes les personnes qui ont fait l'objet d'accusations.»

«Si la politique actuelle qui facilite la mise en accusation était abolie, cela représenterait un recul de nombreuses années.»

«La politique de mise en accusation ne trouve son efficacité que si elle est appuyée par un système de soutien communautaire et un système juridique convivial.»

«Ce sont les femmes qui savent le mieux ce qu'elles veulent.»

Bien que la mise en accusation obligatoire pour voies de fait contre un conjoint puisse s'avérer un moyen de dissuasion efficace, il y a des variations dans la façon dont cette disposition est appliquée à travers le pays. Parmi les raisons de ces écarts, citons le fait que certains jettent le blâme sur les victimes, les limites du Code criminel relativement aux accusations en matière de mauvais traitements psychologiques ou affectifs et d'exploitation économique; et le refus de la police d'intervenir, surtout dans les cas où les femmes ne souhaitent pas que des accusations soient portées. Les ordonnances limitatives et les engagements de garder la paix ne garantissent pas leur sécurité. Les agents de police ont besoin de soutien et de ressources pour pouvoir accomplir leur travail. Ils estiment qu'on s'est déchargé du problème sur eux.

«Le mandat des professionnels devrait être de s'occuper des cas, plutôt que simplement les signaler.»

On soulignait, dans les notes des discussions, la possibilité de rendre obligatoire la dénonciation des cas de violence contre les femmes et les personnes âgées, mais on indiquait que la politique actuelle de signalement obligatoire des cas d'enfants maltraités a surchargé dangereusement le système de la protection de la jeunesse. L'omission de signaler un cas présumé d'enfant maltraité étant, en soi, un acte criminel au Canada, le nombre de cas signalés à la Protection de la jeunesse a augmenté bien au delà de la capacité du système, et on ne dispose pas des fonds nécessaires pour répondre à la demande croissante.

De plus, une politique de dénonciation obligatoire des cas de violence chez les adultes pourrait porter atteinte au droit des individus de diriger eux-mêmes leur propre vie. Vu l'impossibilité de résoudre ce dilemme entre les droits et la sécurité, il est essentiel de mettre en place des systèmes de soutien appropriés avant d'élaborer d'autres politiques de signalement obligatoire.

«Notre attention s'est déplacée vers les agresseurs et les contrevenants. Certains estiment que le système juridique s'occupe des contrevenants mais que malheureusement, il néglige les victimes. Il faut aussi mettre sur pied des programmes et des services qui s'adressent aux victimes. Cependant, il faut avant tout s'occuper des agresseurs si l'on veut briser le cycle de la violence.»

Les participants ont beaucoup parlé de l'importance de retirer le contrevenant du milieu familial, plutôt que la victime ou l'autre parent. Bien que, logiquement, ce soient les contrevenants plutôt que les victimes qui devraient subir les conséquences d'un retrait du milieu familial, notre incapacité à l'heure actuelle de protéger les femmes, les enfants et les personnes âgées dans leur propre foyer constitue une véritable source de préoccupation. Parmi les autres questions dont les participants ont discuté, mentionnons l'efficacité des programmes de réinsertion sociale, les traitements pour hommes violents ordonnés par la cour, et le besoin pressant de mettre sur pied des programmes de traitement au sein du système correctionnel.

L'article «Autres réactions à la violence familiale», de J.H.C. Clarke, a été rédigé en vue de la conférence et il a été inclus dans le procès verbal de la conférence à la demande générale de son groupe. Reflétant le point de vue de la police, l'auteur (un instructeur de l'*Atlantic Police Academy*) étudie la question de la responsabilité du contrevenant par rapport à son comportement violent.

Il faudrait effectuer des études sur les femmes qui ont eu recours à des poursuites juridiques pour déterminer la part de succès et la part d'échec de leur démarche et pour décrire leur expérience.

«Les collectivités autochtones du Nord appellent la "Cour volante" le "Cirque volant"»

Les collectivités autochtones désirent avoir des choix plus nombreux à l'intérieur comme à l'extérieur du système de justice pénale et elles souhaitent qu'on offre davantage de soutien aux initiatives communautaires adaptées à leur culture.

«Les jeunes contrevenants sont souvent plus violents à leur sortie de prison que lors de leur entrée, parce qu'ils n'ont pas bénéficié de services de réinsertion sociale.»

Les enfants victimes ont besoin qu'on les croie, qu'on les soutienne et qu'on leur explique le processus judiciaire. Les services qui s'adressent aux enfants nécessitent davantage de fonds et les personnes qui effectuent des entrevues auprès de ces jeunes victimes doivent recevoir une formation spécialisée.

La police et les maisons d'hébergement devraient tenir de meilleurs dossiers pour que l'on puisse déterminer l'incidence des cas de mauvais traitements infligés aux personnes handicapées.

En ce qui concerne les personnes âgées, la question de la dénonciation obligatoire devrait faire l'objet de discussions et il faudrait faire des efforts pour mieux comprendre le phénomène des mauvais traitements dans les établissements et recueillir des données sur ce sujet.

Les groupes ethnoculturels ont besoin d'information et la police devrait être sensibilisée aux différentes cultures. Il faudrait tenir compte des besoins particuliers des collectivités éloignées et des collectivités rurales.

Thème V: Soutien et traitement des victimes et des contrevenants – Exposés des spécialistes

Maggie Hodgson, directrice, *Nechi Institute*, Alberta

Mesdames, Messieurs, concitoyens aînés, je vous invite aujourd'hui à faire un voyage. Les collectivités autochtones voyagent par leurs contes. Je vais vous raconter une histoire qui montre qu'il est important d'aborder la question de la violence familiale sous un nouveau jour.

Grâce à une chanson, une danse et son sens de la responsabilité personnelle, monsieur Lapin était capable d'envoyer ses yeux danser dans les airs puis de les faire revenir. Monsieur Renard, impressionné par ce pouvoir, demanda à monsieur Lapin de lui montrer comment faire. Le lapin accepta en avertissant le renard qu'il ne devait utiliser ce pouvoir que trois fois. Le renard répondit «Oui, oui». Après avoir utilisé le pouvoir trois fois, monsieur Renard se rendit à Ottawa, mais il tenait tellement à montrer son pouvoir à ses amis qu'il l'utilisa une fois de plus ... mais ses yeux ne revinrent pas. «Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu! J'ai manqué à ma promesse et j'ai perdu mes yeux», dit-il à madame Souris lorsqu'il la rencontra. Madame Souris donna un de ses yeux à monsieur Renard qui, le faisant rouler dans son orbite, ne pouvait distinguer que les *petits détails* et *une seule personne à la fois*. Il remercia tout de même madame Souris en lui offrant un cadeau, mais comme il voulait avoir un plus grand champ de vision, il demanda à monsieur Buffle de lui donner l'un de ses yeux. Monsieur Buffle accepta. «Merci, merci», dit le renard. Il pouvait maintenant voir tout en même temps, et voir *loin, voir la collectivité, la famille* et l'*avenir*. Il sut alors qu'il avait tout ce qu'il fallait pour participer à la Conférence nationale sur la violence familiale, avec son oeil de souris qui lui permettait de distinguer les détails et son oeil de buffle qui lui donnait une vision plus large. Avec ses nouveaux yeux, il ne voyait pas uniquement le problème juridique, pas seulement la question de la sécurité, mais aussi toutes les questions qui s'y rattachaient.

Je vais vous parler d'une collectivité indienne où on a regardé avec des yeux de souris les souffrances des contrevenants et des victimes. Puis de la façon dont peu à peu, avec des yeux de buffle, on s'est aperçu comment l'éducation de la collectivité, les cérémonies spirituelles indiennes, le fait de cesser de nier les problèmes, le traitement, la collaboration avec le juge, le ministère public, la police, les aînés, les groupes d'entraide et la thérapie ont apporté la guérison aux membres de cette collectivité. Et maintenant, ceux-ci veulent construire un centre de thérapie de la famille pour lequel ils ont amassé 200 000 $.

Pour que les 100 adultes et les 200 enfants de cette collectivité atteignent un certain bien-être, il a fallu établir un leadership discret, formel et informel, faire appel aux cérémonies et à la spiritualité indiennes et lutter contre le refus bien enraciné de reconnaître l'existence de la violence faite aux femmes, aux personnes âgées, aux enfants et des cas d'exploitation sexuelle des enfants. Grâce à l'amour et à la spiritualité et à la spirale des individus, des familles, de la collectivité, du système juridique et du créateur, les membres de la collectivité mènent une vie de plus en plus saine depuis les années 1970, parce qu'ils ont pu franchir les étapes suivantes:

1 ils se sont mis à l'écoute d'un enfant qui demandait à vivre sans l'alcoolisme et la négligence;
2 ils ont élaboré un processus d'intervention communautaire pour lutter contre l'alcoolisme;
3 ils ont attaché beaucoup d'importance à la dimension spirituelle et à la collectivité;
4 ils ont acquis des connaissances, par l'expérience, sur l'art de communiquer, la croissance personnelle et la consommation excessive de drogues et d'alcool;
5 ils ont été dirigés par des chefs sérieux, jeunes et âgés, qui ont renoncé à l'alcool, qui étaient attachés aux valeurs de la famille élargie;
6 ceux-ci se sont efforcés de se préoccuper simultanément des intérêts des individus *et* des familles;
7 en canalisant leur énergie vers leur attachement à la famille élargie;
8 ils ont accusé de violence, à l'égard d'un enfant, un membre de leur bande travaillant à l'école, en 1985, alors que 95 p. 100 des membres de la collectivité étaient devenus sobres;
9 ils ont cessé de nier le problème, leur douleur et leur besoin d'aide;

10 ils m'ont invitée et ont invité d'autres personnes à aider les victimes et ils ont parlé de la façon dont la violence s'était répandue sous toutes ses formes: violence physique à l'égard des enfants et exploitation sexuelle des enfants, violence conjugale, exploitation sexuelle par des prêtres dans les internats, viol de femmes âgées, cruauté mentale dans les familles consistant à proférer des menaces d'administrer un mauvais remède et abus de pouvoir et de privilèges sous de nombreuses formes dans la collectivité;
11 ils se sont mis à l'écoute des autres en leur apportant un soutien: un contrevenant et sa famille élargie ont suivi un traitement ensemble et la collectivité s'est présentée devant le tribunal pour soutenir le contrevenant, la victime et la famille;
12 ils ont augmenté les ressources: on a aménagé des huttes séparées pour les femmes et les hommes, où ont lieu les activités liées au processus de guérison spirituelle;
13 ils ont organisé des séances hebdomadaires d'entraide;
14 ils ont réagi, en tant que collectivité, au suicide en 1988 d'un jeune homosexuel;
15 ils ont mis sur pied des groupes de jeunes qui apprennent à d'autres jeunes à animer des ateliers;
16 ils ont valorisé la culture et la langue indiennes à l'école et dans la collectivité;
17 l'an passé, on s'est occupé en tant que collectivité de nouveaux cas de viol et d'inceste. La planification des activités a été en grande partie effectuée par les victimes;
18 ils ont mis sur pied un programme de traitement qui s'attaque simultanément à toutes les formes d'intoxication pour assurer le succès des interventions;
19 ils ont formé un comité de coordination composé du procureur de la Couronne, de la police, du conseil, des services sociaux et communautaires;
20 ils ont offert à la victime un soutien dès le signalement de son cas;
21 ils ont offert une formation de 10 jours à 40 membres de la collectivité sur les attitudes et les questions fondamentales liées à la violence;
22 en tenant des procès dans la réserve;
23 en déterminant la façon dont un prêtre contrevenant purgerait sa peine;
24 pour ce qui est des contrevenants, en acceptant d'être mis en accusation de façon à pouvoir recevoir un traitement;
25 en donnant une formation appropriée aux dirigeants élus;
26 ils ont célébré leur vie plus saine en chantant et en dansant, et en célébrant, en tant que famille, avec le juge et le procureur, la fin d'une comparution devant le tribunal; et enfin
27 ils se sont engagés à participer au traitement et ils ont fait intervenir leur corps, leur pensée, leur esprit, le système juridique et l'environnement dans la longue marche vers la santé par le jeûne.

Mesdames et Messieurs, *cette* collectivité, *dans sa souffrance*, s'est servi de ses *yeux de souris* et de ses *yeux de buffle* pour regarder d'anciens problèmes sous un jour nouveau. C'est le défi que nous vous proposons et le pouvoir que nous vous souhaitons.

Jennifer Mercer, Conseil consultatif provincial sur la situation de la femme, Terre-Neuve et Labrador

Je désire vous parler de l'«Interagency Committee on Violence Against Women» de St. John's, Terre-Neuve, en tant que modèle pour la coordination des services aux femmes victimes de violence. En 1983, alors que j'étais chercheuse, j'ai eu des entretiens avec des femmes ayant déjà été victimes de la violence conjugale et des membres des organismes qui leur sont venus en aide. Il est devenu évident que les problèmes de nature organisationnelle ne font qu'augmenter les sentiments d'angoisse et d'impuissance déjà ressentis par les femmes avant de demander de l'aide. Cette information a été portée à l'attention du conseil consultatif, qui a établi un comité de coordination.

Le premier problème que nous avons rencontré, à la fin d'une période quadriennale, a été la méfiance entre les organismes. Cette méfiance provenait de la façon dont le conseil était perçu à l'intérieur comme à l'extérieur du gouvernement. Nous nous sommes retirés, avons fourni des outils et facilité l'établissement du comité. L'étape suivante consistait à faire face à cette méfiance qui existait entre 40 (et plus tard 104) organismes qui souvent ne connaissaient pas l'existence l'un de l'autre. Ce manque d'information dissipait tout doute quant au besoin de coordination!

Le comité de coordination de London a été très généreux et nous nous sommes fondés sur ses conseils pour équilibrer le nombre de représentants d'organismes juridiques et de groupes communautaires qui siégeraient au sein du comité.

En janvier 1988, l'«Interagency Committee on Violence Against Women» tenait sa première réunion et on a en toute bonne foi commencé à s'attaquer avec sérieux au problème de la méfiance. Une grande partie des progrès dans l'amélioration des services s'adressant aux femmes ont été réalisés par les sous-comités. Les sous-comités de la santé, de la justice, de la prestation des services directs, de l'éducation et de la politique sociale ont tous élargi considérablement les connaissances dont on disposait sur la question de la violence faite aux femmes et contribué à l'amélioration des services. Nous espérons éventuellement créer un sous-comité du clergé.

Chacun a appris à sublimer ses frustrations en découvrant les autres et en collaborant pour mieux apprendre afin de pouvoir enseigner aux autres. Nous devons composer avec un processus décisionnel collectif; les contraintes liées à l'administration et la coordination du comité et de ses six sous-comités et avec une certaine rotation du personnel.

Les membres du comité estiment que leurs efforts leur ont permis de mieux connaître les ressources existantes, qu'ils ont permis d'établir un réseau de soutien au sein duquel ils peuvent partager leurs préoccupations et que cela facilite leur tâche et améliore la qualité de leurs interventions auprès des victimes.

Nous nous proposons d'implanter notre modèle dans les régions rurales de la province. Notre but n'est pas de créer un meilleur système, mais de vivre dans une société sans violence. Notre critère pour le choix des objectifs est la mesure dans laquelle la réalisation de l'objectif nous rapprochera de notre but.

Thème V: Soutien et traitement des victimes et des contrevenants – Discussions de groupe et recommandations

«Dans l'intervention, on ne peut prendre qu'une porte. Il faut passer par toutes les fenêtres.»

«Nous aimerions que des crédits équivalents à ceux qui sont affectés à la défense nationale soient consacrés à la défense des femmes et des enfants.»

«La véritable question qui se pose est celle de l'égalité et de la liberté de tout individu de faire des choix.»

Dans les notes de discussion et les recommandations liées à ce thème, il est principalement question de la philosophie de l'intervention. On s'est intéressé à l'efficacité des interventions, aux questions du choix des intervenants et de la concurrence pour l'obtention de nouveaux fonds, aux réponses des bénévoles et de la collectivité, aux besoins des victimes et des contrevenants en matière de traitement et de services. Quel que soit le type de traitement offert, celui-ci doit s'appuyer essentiellement sur la protection de la victime et l'affirmation de la notion du bien et de la valeur de la non-violence.

L'une des principales sources de préoccupation qui a été mentionnée, en ce qui concerne le traitement et le soutien aux victimes, est le manque de coordination entre les services offerts aux hommes et les services offerts aux femmes, la sécurité de la femme n'étant pas nécessairement assurée pendant la période où l'homme suit un traitement. L'obligation des groupes d'hommes de communiquer avec les groupes de femmes est considérée comme importante. De plus, on souhaiterait que les contrevenants suivent un traitement «complet», par opposition à un traitement «partiel» (c.-à-d. un traitement simultané contre la consommation excessive d'alcool et la violence).

On a beaucoup parlé des besoins des contrevenants en matière de traitement et de services. La nécessité de disposer d'une série de modèles de traitements capables de répondre à des besoins variés a été soulignée. Les traitements devraient être fondés sur le principe que les hommes doivent assumer la responsabilité de leurs actes et devraient avoir pour but de provoquer un véritable changement de comportement et d'attitude qui n'est pas sans s'apparenter à un processus de «prise de conscience».

Le manque de communication entre les services offerts aux hommes et ceux offerts aux femmes constitue un problème aussi important que le besoin d'une stratégie d'intervention féministe et d'un plus grand nombre de programmes de traitement.

La nécessité d'offrir un traitement tant à l'intérieur qu'à l'extérieur du système correctionnel et la nécessité de mener des études d'évaluation sérieuses sur l'efficacité de ces programmes ont été mentionnées.

Dans les cas où un agresseur est obligé de suivre un traitement, il semble qu'on obtient de meilleurs résultats par une thérapie de groupe.

Les groupes d'entraide en tant que modèle de traitement sont considérés comme un moyen pour les victimes et les contrevenants de se guérir eux-mêmes. On a suggéré de combiner le traitement offert par les professionnels et la participation à des groupes d'entraide.

La collaboration entre les services, soit par le biais de comités de coordination, soit par l'entremise de contacts réguliers, a été mentionnée comme un moyen efficace pour les collectivités de répondre aux besoins des victimes et des agresseurs.

Les notes sur le sujet de l'hébergement portaient principalement sur les besoins et les expériences des maisons d'hébergement pour femmes. Bien que ces maisons aient besoin d'un financement plus stable et doivent étendre leur gamme de services, elles ne peuvent répondre aux besoins de toutes les femmes et il ne serait pas normal qu'elles assument l'entière responsabilité de la lutte contre la violence faite aux femmes.

Parmi les sujets qui devraient faire l'objet de recherches, citons l'évaluation des programmes de traitement des agresseurs, les besoins des femmes vivant dans les régions rurales et les régions éloignées, la sécurité des femmes dans les maisons d'hébergement, l'élaboration de méthodes formatives de recherche; il faudrait également rendre les résultats de recherche plus accessibles en les diffusant dans tout le pays.

On a demandé aux gouvernements fédéral, provinciaux et territoriaux de reconnaître à quel point les services de première ligne manquent de ressources et de «cesser de minimiser et de nier l'ampleur de cette épidémie (de violence)». On a demandé à la Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement (SCHL) de fournir les fonds d'exploitation nécessaires pour répondre aux besoins régionaux.

Les centres de traitement et les maisons d'hébergement dans les réserves et à l'extérieur des réserves doivent être instaurés et soutenus par les collectivités autochtones et leurs services définis, pour que soit favorisé le «cycle de la guérison». Des interventions visant à enrayer la violence doivent accompagner les traitements contre la consommation excessive de drogues et d'alcool. Les enfants autochtones ne devraient plus être placés dans des familles d'accueil de race blanche.

Il faut trouver des solutions de rechange aux maisons d'hébergement pour les personnes âgées victimes de violence, en tenant compte de leur manque d'autonomie et de leur style de vie. On a suggéré de rattacher des maisons d'hébergement aux résidences pour personnes âgées. Les besoins en matière de traitement et de services ne sont pas comblés par des programmes tels que la «Popote roulante» ou les services d'auxiliaire familial; le personnel des établissements et les professionnels de la santé et des services sociaux devront offrir davantage de services aux victimes de violence.

Le traitement offert aux enfants devrait être élargi et s'adresser également aux enfants témoins de la violence entre adultes, aux jeunes contrevenants et aux enfants portés disparus. Il est très important que l'on réponde aux besoins de ces enfants en augmentant les ressources et en faisant montre d'une plus grande sensibilité dans notre approche. Bien que la tendance à retirer les enfants du milieu familial ait quelque peu diminué, on estime qu'il y a encore trop d'enfants qui sont placés en famille d'accueil et d'agresseurs qui restent dans le milieu familial.

Il faudra modifier les pratiques et la politique établies pour répondre aux besoins des femmes des collectivités ethnoculturelles en matière de traitement et d'hébergement. Ces femmes devraient pouvoir séjourner plus longtemps dans les maisons d'hébergement, ce qui faciliterait leur adaptation; il faudrait leur offrir des services d'interprétation efficaces, ce qui leur permettrait d'avoir plus facilement accès aux services offerts aux victimes d'actes de violence; il faudrait enfin adapter les services en place pour qu'ils puissent répondre aux besoins des groupes ethnoculturels de la collectivité.

Les collectivités du Nord ont besoin de solutions plus souples qu'on pourrait substituer au modèle de maison d'hébergement habituel et qui tiendraient compte des besoins des femmes qui subissent des pressions sociales pour garder le secret.

Discours de clôture

M^me^ Barbara McDougall, ministre responsable de la Condition féminine

Je vous remercie tous d'avoir participé à cette Conférence sur la violence familiale. C'est une grande première que d'avoir réussi à réunir un si grand nombre de personnes autour de cette question complexe et j'estime que la consultation peut grandement aider à enrayer la violence faite aux femmes, aux enfants et aux personnes âgées.

Les causes de la violence sont profondes et les solutions sont complexes, mais il est de plus en plus évident que tout comme aucune famille ou organisme ne peut lutter seul contre le problème de la violence, aucun gouvernement ne peut le faire sans la collaboration d'autres paliers de gouvernement *et* d'autres groupes de la société. Je crois qu'on a bien démontré aussi que la participation du secteur privé est nécessaire.

Le gouvernement fédéral a pris les devants en finançant les initiatives en matière de violence familiale et d'exploitation sexuelle des enfants. De plus, nous nous sommes efforcés d'orienter les services vers les femmes indiennes et inuit, les femmes immigrantes et appartenant aux minorités visibles, les femmes handicapées et les femmes des régions rurales et des régions éloignées, par exemple en lançant l'Opération Refuge. Bien qu'il y a encore beaucoup de problèmes à régler, je crois que nous sommes sur la bonne voie. Mais le gouvernement fédéral ne peut pas agir seul.

Les provinces, les groupes communautaires, les groupes de bénévoles, les organismes et les associations constituent les forces vives dans la lutte contre la violence familiale au pays. Nous avons convoqué la présente conférence pour discuter des orientations que nous devrions prendre.

Les discussions, les débats et les sources de stimulation et de frustration ont aidé les participants à mieux comprendre le problème, et un certain nombre de sujets clés ont été identifiés, comme l'éducation de la population, le rôle des médias et la prestation de services.

Les suggestions qui ont été formulées pour la prévention de la violence familiale se rattachent à des approches variées qui reconnaissent l'importance de se prendre en charge ou de renforcer l'estime de soi, d'utiliser des modèles multidisciplinaires et d'effectuer une planification à long terme. Vous avez tous remis en question l'acceptation générale – voire l'éloge – de la violence par notre société. Il n'existe pas de solutions instantanées.

Vos recommandations et vos contributions, vos différends et vos consensus rejoignent les conclusions de nos consultations avec les provinces, les territoires et les organismes non gouvernementaux. Oui, le gouvernement est bien décidé à trouver des solutions.

Nous devons continuer à chercher des façons de collaborer, de discuter, d'aider les victimes de violence et les familles, de provoquer un changement permanent des attitudes et des valeurs, de faire comprendre aux hommes qu'il n'est pas acceptable de battre sa femme, de faire comprendre aux enfants que certaines formes d'attouchement ne sont pas acceptables, d'accorder à nos aînés la dignité à laquelle ils ont droit.

Ce n'est que lorsque nous aurons trouvé des solutions que les femmes, les enfants et les aînés pourront vivre en paix et en sécurité, et que nos collectivités véhiculeront les valeurs de base qui devraient guider notre pays: la paix, l'honneur, et la dignité.

Commentaires des participants sur la conférence nationale

Les participants pouvaient noter leurs attentes, leurs préoccupations et leurs commentaires relatifs à la Conférence nationale sur des formulaires d'évaluation qui leur avaient été remis et ils pouvaient aussi intégrer leurs commentaires aux notes de leur groupe de travail. Ils ont également exprimé oralement leurs préoccupations quant à diverses questions liées aux collectivités autochtones, au féminisme et au racisme.

Les préoccupations suivantes se dégagent de ces trois sources: représentation insuffisante des groupes autochtones, besoin de comptes rendus précis sur les questions touchant les collectivités autochtones; crainte que des préjugés raciaux aient pu motiver les énoncés faits par certains groupes au sujet des nouveaux arrivants au Canada; représentation insuffisante des groupes d'immigrants, des personnes âgées, des travailleurs de première ligne, des personnes handicapées et des francophones; horaire trop chargé; manque de microphones durant la séance plénière; erreurs dans les résumés des exposés.

Malgré ces points négatifs, plus des trois quarts des participants qui ont rempli un formulaire d'évaluation ont indiqué que leurs attentes avaient été comblées entièrement ou en partie. Enfin, mentionnons que le sommaire (préparé par Eunadie Johnson) des préoccupations et des recommandations, lequel a été présenté au gouvernement par un groupe de femmes, est inclus dans le procès verbal de la conférence.

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Les causes de la violence sont profondes et les solutions sont complexes, mais il est de plus en plus évident que tout comme aucune famille ou organisme ne peut lutter seul contre le problème de la violence, aucun gouvernement ne peut le faire sans la collaboration d'autres paliers de gouvernement *et* d'autres groupes de la société. Je crois qu'on a bien démontré aussi que la participation du secteur privé est nécessaire.

Le gouvernement fédéral a pris les devants en finançant les initiatives en matière de violence familiale et d'exploitation sexuelle des enfants. De plus, nous nous sommes efforcés d'orienter les services vers les femmes indiennes et inuit, les femmes immigrantes et appartenant aux minorités visibles, les femmes handicapées et les femmes des régions rurales et des régions éloignées, par exemple en lançant l'Opération Refuge. Bien qu'il y a encore beaucoup de problèmes à régler, je crois que nous sommes sur la bonne voie. Mais le gouvernement fédéral ne peut pas agir seul.

Les provinces, les groupes communautaires, les groupes de bénévoles, les organismes et les associations constituent les forces vives dans la lutte contre la violence familiale au pays. Nous avons convoqué la présente conférence pour discuter des orientations que nous devrions prendre.

Les discussions, les débats et les sources de stimulation et de frustration ont aidé les participants à mieux comprendre le problème, et un certain nombre de sujets clés ont été identifiés, comme l'éducation de la population, le rôle des médias et la prestation de services.

Les suggestions qui ont été formulées pour la prévention de la violence familiale se rattachent à des approches variées qui reconnaissent l'importance de se prendre en charge ou de renforcer l'estime de soi, d'utiliser des modèles multidisciplinaires et d'effectuer une planification à long terme. Vous avez tous remis en question l'acceptation générale – voire l'éloge – de la violence par notre société. Il n'existe pas de solutions instantanées.

Vos recommandations et vos contributions, vos différends et vos consensus rejoignent les conclusions de nos consultations avec les provinces, les territoires et les organismes non gouvernementaux. Oui, le gouvernement est bien décidé à trouver des solutions.

Nous devons continuer à chercher des façons de collaborer, de discuter, d'aider les victimes de violence et les familles, de provoquer un changement permanent des attitudes et des valeurs, de faire comprendre aux hommes qu'il n'est pas acceptable de battre sa femme, de faire comprendre aux enfants que certaines formes d'attouchement ne sont pas acceptables, d'accorder à nos aînés la dignité à laquelle ils ont droit.

Ce n'est que lorsque nous aurons trouvé des solutions que les femmes, les enfants et les aînés pourront vivre en paix et en sécurité, et que nos collectivités véhiculeront les valeurs de base qui devraient guider notre pays: la paix, l'honneur, et la dignité.

Commentaires des participants sur la conférence nationale

Les participants pouvaient noter leurs attentes, leurs préoccupations et leurs commentaires relatifs à la Conférence nationale sur des formulaires d'évaluation qui leur avaient été remis et ils pouvaient aussi intégrer leurs commentaires aux notes de leur groupe de travail. Ils ont également exprimé oralement leurs préoccupations quant à diverses questions liées aux collectivités autochtones, au féminisme et au racisme.

Les préoccupations suivantes se dégagent de ces trois sources: représentation insuffisante des groupes autochtones, besoin de comptes rendus précis sur les questions touchant les collectivités autochtones; crainte que des préjugés raciaux aient pu motiver les énoncés faits par certains groupes au sujet des nouveaux arrivants au Canada; représentation insuffisante des groupes d'immigrants, des personnes âgées, des travailleurs de première ligne, des personnes handicapées et des francophones; horaire trop chargé; manque de microphones durant la séance plénière; erreurs dans les résumés des exposés.

Malgré ces points négatifs, plus des trois quarts des participants qui ont rempli un formulaire d'évaluation ont indiqué que leurs attentes avaient été comblées entièrement ou en partie. Enfin, mentionnons que le sommaire (préparé par Eunadie Johnson) des préoccupations et des recommandations, lequel a été présenté au gouvernement par un groupe de femmes, est inclus dans le procès verbal de la conférence.

Government of Canada Gouvernement du Canada

Working Together: 1989 National Forum on Family Violence *Proceedings*

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Working Together:
1989 National Forum on Family Violence

PROCEEDINGS

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November 1989

The discussion notes and recommendations presented in this report represent the views of the Forum participants and not necessarily those of the **Government of Canada.**

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INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Federal Family Violence Initiative

Family violence is a complex issue involving many jurisdictions in Canada. The federal government provides financial support towards prevention and management of family violence projects through equalization payments, block funding and various cost-sharing arrangements with the provinces and territories. The Federal government is also responsible for criminal law and procedures and for the direct delivery of certain services such as medical, educational and social services to aboriginal people on reserves and in certain correctional services. Fourteen departments cooperate together to address family violence at the federal level.

Provincial and territorial governments and, where delegated, municipal governments are primarily responsible for the delivery of health, social and educational services and for administering judicial concerns. The non-governmental sector, including community-based groups, professional associations and private agencies, are responsible for training professionals, as well as providing advocacy and service delivery roles.

Over the last two decades, much action has been undertaken by communities, provincial and territorial governments and by the voluntary sector to deal with family violence. Since the mid-1970s, the federal government has taken increasing measures to address this problem. In 1986, the Child Sexual Abuse Initiative, which included an act to amend the Criminal Code and the Canada Evidence Act, S.C. 1987, c. 24 (Bill C-15), was announced. This five-year Initiative (1986-1991) reflects federal funding of $25.1 million administered by the Departments of National Health and Welfare and Justice. It focuses on prevention, treatment, professional education and training, and evaluation of innovative programming. As part of this Initiative, Mr. Rix Rogers was appointed as Special Advisor to the Minister of Health and Welfare on Child Sexual Abuse. His report is expected in early 1990.

The Child Sexual Abuse Initiative was followed by the June 1988 announcement of a federal Family Violence Initiative consisting of various short-term measures and a process for developing a long-term national approach to address family violence. This four-year (1988-1992) Initiative represents federal funding of $40 million administered by six federal departments (National Health and Welfare, Justice, Solicitor General, Secretary of State, Indian and Northern Affairs, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation). National Health and Welfare has the lead and is responsible for coordinating federal efforts in this area; $22.2 million of this Initiative is allocated for providing shelter to women who are battered and their children and is administered through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. The remaining portion focuses on public awareness, information dissemination, research, evaluation and on community-based projects.

The development of this approach has involved a systematic consultation process with other levels of government, with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and with the corporate sector. As part of this consultation process, there have been formal consultations with the provinces and territories, a meeting with 50 national NGOs, a written consultation with an additional 42 national NGOs, a series of consultations by the Special Advisor on Child Sexual Abuse to the Minister of National Health and Welfare which culminated in a National Workshop, and the **Working Together: 1989 National Forum on Family Violence**, which took place June 18-21, 1989. The National Forum represented a key juncture in the Initiative because it provided an opportunity for 400 representatives from all sectors to actively assist in the identification of strategic options for the long-term national approach. The information obtained from the Forum will be used by the Federal Government to assist it to develop a long-term national approach to family violence.

1.2 WORKING TOGETHER: 1989 National Forum on Family Violence

1.2.1 Goal and Objectives

The goal of the National Forum on Family Violence was to contribute to the development of national responses to the problems of child abuse, wife abuse and elder abuse.

The objectives of the National Forum on Family Violence were to:

- sustain a commitment to the reduction of family violence;
- improve the effectiveness of the efforts of all parties involved in all aspects of the family violence problem;
- promote cooperation among the many agencies and levels of governments involved in all aspects of the family violence problem;
- foster an interdisciplinary approach to the subject of family violence;
- identify areas of fundamental concern which could be addressed in Canada's response to family violence; and
- establish priority options for dealing with family violence concerns over the long-term.

1.2.2 Participation

Four hundred individuals involved in family violence program and policy development, research, service delivery, advocacy, public or professional education were invited from across Canada (Appendix A). The participants were selected to represent all sectors: government, non-governmental organizations, academics, researchers, writers, corporations; fields: health, social services, education, law enforcement, criminal justice, status of women; disciplines: law, nursing, medicine, social work, judiciary, sheltering, psychology, psychiatry, child protection, gerontology; and special interest groups: remote, rural, aboriginal, disabled, ethnocultural, and geographical regions. Selection of participants, apart from nominees of provincial and territorial governments, was made by an Interdepartmental Planning Committee comprised of representatives from Health and Welfare Canada, Status of Women Canada, Secretary of State, Solicitor General, Justice Canada, and Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Each provincial and territorial government was asked to nominate participants from the governmental and non-governmental sectors within their jurisdictions.

Limiting the number of participants to 400 while attempting to represent the many sectors and jurisdictions concerned with the issue meant that many people who could have contributed to the Forum just could not be accommodated. The organizers recognized from the outset that it was not possible to have full representation from every sector within every jurisdiction. However, efforts were made to achieve a balanced and wide representation of sectors and interests. To this end, and in recognition of the need to include participants from all sectors, the Federal government paid all travel and accommodation costs for all non-government participants and travel costs for all government participants.

One group which was not adequately represented at the National Forum was the disabled, due to the fact that national meetings of the Coalition of Provincial Organizations of the Handicapped and The Canadian Rehabilitation Council of the Disabled were running concurrently. Acknowledging this lack of representation, the organizers ensured that "family violence and the disabled" was addressed as part of the plenary presentations. There was also limited representation from ethnocultural, rural and remote communities, which is reflected in the paucity of working group discussions related to these special interest groups.

1.2.3 Format

The National Forum was designed primarily as a working conference to enable experts from concerned sectors to identify issues and discuss potential responses to family violence.

Prior to the National Forum, a package of material was sent to participants to assist in their preparations for working group discussions. Each package included the Final Program (See Appendix B), the Terms of Reference for the five themes (Appendix C), a discussion paper on Wife Abuse written by Linda MacLeod, a discussion paper on Child Abuse written by Andy Wachtel, and a discussion paper on Abuse of the Elderly written by Nancy Gnaedinger (the background papers are available through the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence).

At the National Forum, participants were assigned to small interdisciplinary working groups or task forces, each with its own volunteer facilitator and recorder. There were 20 working groups, four of which conducted bilingual discussions with the assistance of simultaneous interpretation. Each group spent almost 12 hours together, addressing the following five themes related to family violence prevention and intervention:

- Theme I — Extent and Nature of Family Violence
- Theme II — Education of the Public, Professions and Workers in the Field
- Theme III — Prevention of Violence and Protection of the Vulnerable
- Theme IV — Justice in the Intervention and Prosecution of Family Violence
- Theme V — Support and Treatment for Victims and Offenders

The outcome of these working groups was approximately 600 pages of raw notes detailing their discussions, conclusions and recommendations.

Although the National Forum was primarily a "working" conference, many opportunities existed for information sharing during workshops, breaks, an audio-visual viewing evening and in the display area. Approximately 70 organizations participated in the displays. Also, several special interest groups held meetings in the networking rooms which were made available on a first-come, first-served basis. Furthermore, a Directory of Participating Organizations, based on information submitted by participants at the time of registration, was compiled and distributed on-site.

In addition to the above, summaries of the individual workshops and of each theme were prepared, printed overnight and made available to participants during the Forum. The intent of these summaries was to provide participants with a sense of the discussions taking place overall and not to serve as official transcripts of the working group discussions. Unfortunately, the purpose of these on-site summaries was not adequately conveyed to participants and resulted in some apprehension about the entire reporting process (See Participants' Perspectives).

1.2.4 Proceedings

The Proceedings document is a report on the outcomes of the **Working Together: 1989 National Forum on Family Violence**. It is intended for the participants as a record of what transpired, for persons who wished to participate but could not be accommodated, for the federal government to assist in the development of a long-term national approach to family violence and as a general resource to persons concerned about violence in Canada. The document has four main sections: 1) an Introduction; 2) the Plenary Addresses; 3) the Working Group Discussions and Recommendations organized by theme; and 4) Participants' Perspectives. In the Appendices are found the List of Participants (A), the Program (B) and the Terms of Reference (C).

With the exception of the Introduction and the Executive Summary[1], the true authors of the Proceedings are the participants of the National Forum. As it was not possible to consult with each and every "author" in the drafting of this document, the editors have made every attempt to capture the participants' ideas in, as an accurate and complete a manner as possible.

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[1] The Executive Summary provides an overview of the plenaries, the group discussion notes and recommendations and the participants' perspectives. It is not intended to replace the considerable detail of the Proceedings document but to serve as an introduction.

The Proceedings Document and the Executive Summary are available free of charge from the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence, Family Violence Prevention Division, Social Service Programs Branch, National Health and Welfare, 7th Floor, Brooke Claxton Building., Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 1B5 (613) 957-2938 or toll free at 1-800-267-1291.

KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

2.0 KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

2.1 Opening Address

Hon. Perrin Beatty, P.C., M.P.
Minister of National Health and Welfare

"There is nothing new about family violence."

Since one of the first stories in the Bible, when Cain struck Abel, family violence has been all too common throughout society.

But wife assault, child abuse and sexual abuse were seen throughout history as private matters. Problems were handled within the family and society, and governments were not expected to interfere.

Laws were enacted which reflected this belief. A father in an early Roman family had the legal "patria potestas" or the power of the father, awarding him the right to discipline a child, give him away or even have him put to death. English law, as late as the 18th century considered children and women to be little more than the chattels of men.

Society was not to become involved, and indeed, society and government did not have the mechanisms to do so, even if they chose to. One of your discussion papers mentions a social worker in New York in 1874 who, when she rebelled at the gross abuse of a child by her parents, found the government was powerless to act.

The social worker was forced to turn to the American Society of Cruelty to Animals for support. The society was able to intervene because they could argue the child was a member of the animal kingdom and therefore as deserving of protection as a dog or cat.

By the turn of the century, it had become obvious that problems of violence were not being solved within the family that, in some cases, the abusers were powerless to help themselves and that society must protect those they harmed.

In 1891 the Children's Aid Society was established in Canada, to reflect our belief that children are citizens in their own right and that the state has an obligation to assist any minor, in exercising these rights. Shortly thereafter Ontario passed new and precedent setting legislation "An Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to and Better Protection of Children." Other provinces quickly followed suit.

But it wasn't enough. Within the past two decades, the myth of the family as a safe haven for its members has been shattered time and time again. First child abuse, then wife beating and now elderly abuse are being revealed as social and health problems of startling magnitude. Because of the hidden nature of much of the abuse, exact statistics are hard to put together. Still, we have some jarring numbers which tell us that Family Violence is a more serious and widespread problem than many Canadians realize.

In 1987, a report by the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women estimated that as many as one million women a year may be battered by the men with whom they live.

In a 1986 Gallup Poll, one quarter of the respondents said they knew personally of cases of women abused by their husbands.

The Badgley Report suggested that 42% of the population have been victims of unwanted sexual acts. Four out of five of these incidents occurred to children and youths.

And the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics reports that in 1987, 40% of the 642 homicides in Canada involved victims and suspects related by blood, marriage or common-law union.

These are appalling statistics.

They give us some indication of the amount and kinds of violence which occur within Canadian families. But they do not tell the story of the secrets which are kept, of the fear and pain of assault, of the shame, guilt and horror of abuse, or of the disintegration of relationships.

This glimpse of cruelty has shocked Canadian society and spurred many individuals, groups and governments to affect change. The 1980s, particularly, have been years of dynamic change and progress in the field of family violence.

Women's groups have set up an impressive infrastructure of support networks right across Canada.

Hospitals, social and legal aid workers, police and judges have developed guidelines to deal more effectively with cases of family violence.

Provincial governments have launched massive public education programs and solicited the support of the media in raising the awareness of Canadians.

At the federal level, our family violence and child sexual abuse initiatives have gathered resources from six federal departments, and more than $65 million, to discover new ways to prevent, protect and treat.

The number of emergency shelters serving battered women and their children has multiplied by more than four times in the past ten years. That number will increase substantially, with 45% more women and children receiving shelter in Canada every year, when Project Haven comes on stream.

We have amended the Criminal Code to make it easier for children to testify before the courts and to give them added protection from sexual abuse.

And we were the first country in the world to institute nation-wide police charging policies against wife batterers.

We have made real progress, both in learning more about the problem and in devising methods to treat it. But I know that, despite these improvements, many of you are faced with serious problems each and every day. In many cases, there aren't enough shelters, there isn't a large enough staff, the treatment programs are flooded with greater numbers than any of us expected.

The frustration and feeling that you work in isolation can lead to depression and burnout.

I was recently told about someone who said that the trouble with one social worker suffering from burnout was that she "cared too much." I remember thinking that was a very sad commentary about someone who was trying so hard to improve the lives of others. It was clear to me that solving the problem of family violence will require extraordinary effort.

In retrospect, I decided that the comment was one of the greatest compliments possible. I am convinced that it is only by "caring too much" that real change can be accomplished. It is only when people care too much and work too hard, that it is possible for ordinary people to do extraordinary things.

That is why each of you has been invited to this conference. You are the people who care too much, the ones who want to know what we can do to make the lives of Canadians better.

But no individual, no one community, no single government can, acting alone, solve a problem so pervasive and kept so well hidden.

Family violence and child sexual abuse are public issues that demand both personal and parliamentary responses. You are already providing the personal response and I have mentioned some of the parliamentary ones. These are steps in the right direction, but must all be seen as part of a larger plan.

We have reached a turning point in the battle. We have learned a lot about the problem and how complex its solution must be. We have come to realize that protection of the victim and punishment of the abuser will not, by themselves, get rid of family violence.

We have learned that the attacker was often abused as a child himself and that family violence is often a symptom of a vicious cycle which disintegrates families from within.

We have learned that effective solutions demand a comprehensive response, responses which provide immediate relief for the victim, treatment for the perpetrator, and education of peers so they recognize and report problems when they are confronted with them.

If we are to continue to build on the improvements of the past decade, we must draw all of our efforts together. The turning point we have reached demands that we now bring all of the elements together into a national strategy.

When the family violence initiative was announced last year, we knew that a national strategy must be the result. Since then, we have identified five key elements, of which this conference is one, to help us reach that goal.

First, we need information. Without knowing the extent and causes of these problems, we cannot hope to adequately address them. We need better information on child abuse, spousal abuse and elderly abuse. We have had some success in the first two areas. Wife battering has been the subject of much research and the whole appalling field of child sexual abuse has been examined by my Special Advisor, Rix Rogers.

Rix Rogers has consulted with more than 1,400 people and is preparing a report, to be presented to me this fall, which will recommend how the Federal Government should combat child sexual abuse, how government initiatives should be coordinated and how these recommendations should be implemented.

The second stage will come from the conclusions of the more than 350 projects we have funded. Each of these projects was chosen because it promised to provide new information or a practical solution to a problem.

For example, we are funding a national survey of more than 2,000 seniors across Canada. We have only recently begun to suspect that elderly abuse is a serious problem and the survey should answer the question of how widespread it really is.

Another prime example is a project conducted by an association we call the Group of Ten. Ten professional organizations banded together to decide what training is needed by students of nursing, medicine, social work, teaching, psychology, policing, hospital administration, pastoral services or law to help them deal with problems of family violence.

The Group of Ten has decided that there is no room for professional jealousy in a field as serious as family violence and they will identify specific training requirements which support this belief. This is precisely the sort of interdisciplinary cooperation which will be vital in developing national policies.

Each of the other projects has similar information to offer, all of it useful in developing a truly national approach.

Third, it is clear that consultation with non-governmental organizations is essential. In the absence of governmental and societal support, it was the non-governmental organizations which started the battle against family violence. Pooling the resources of the government and the experience of the national voluntary organizations can only be a powerful combination.

On March 7 and 8, we brought representatives of 50 such national organizations to Ottawa, and we contacted another 40 by mail. They provided us with advice on the major issues and what action should be taken.

Fourth, it is obvious that federal, provincial and territorial governments cannot operate successfully in isolation from each other. Input from each area is critical because the nature of the problem and the resources available vary with the different regions.

In ancient Rome, the fasces was a bundle of rods symbolizing the strength of the Empire. Its strength lay in the knowledge that all the rods together were stronger than each apart. The gravity of family violence cries out for such concerted action.

We have been conducting discussions with the provinces and territories for this very reason. A federal team consisting of representatives from the six federal departments involved in this initiative met with every province and territory last fall, so that each could identify their major issues. A second round of consultations will take place this fall so that we can make sure we are properly identifying important areas of action.

At last week's Federal/Provincial Advisory Committee on Institutional Medical Services, guidelines were approved for the response of health institutions to family violence. These guidelines are titled "Guidelines for Standards and Health Care Related to Abuse, Assault, Neglect and Family Violence." This publication, prepared by experts working in the field, provides information and guidance for hospitals and long-term care institutions in the development and management of programs to address all aspects of family violence coming to the attention of care providers.

The fifth contribution, and to my mind the most important, is this National Forum on Family Violence. We have brought representatives here today from all four of the groups I have just mentioned. This is the very first time that so many representatives from so many walks of life have gathered together to discuss this common problem.

This conference has been carefully prepared to encourage you to come up with practical solutions to practical problems. We have divided the topic of family violence into five themes, ranging from education, to justice, through to prevention and support.

On Wednesday, in her closing remarks to this conference, my colleague, Barbara McDougall, as the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, will report to you some of the findings from these seminars.

By the end of the Forum, you should have a very clear idea of what your colleagues have to say about each theme. Maybe even more importantly, this information will be used at the federal level in making our final decisions on our national policy.

By next spring, I will have a national strategy to discuss with my Cabinet colleagues, and Canada will have a comprehensive policy for eradicating one of the worst social problems of this century.

What do we need to implement this strategy? We need commitment, flexibility and the ability to get help to those who need it. We need the grass-roots involvement of many people.

We need participation at the most fundamental levels, by those in support groups, and by those in agencies which deal with the victims of family violence. That will be the mechanism through which new and creative solutions can be found to a problem which to our horror and to our disgrace, has reached epidemic proportions in our culture.

In the past, the problems which faced Canadians, indeed those of every western nation, were solved through efforts by individuals who "cared too much" and through teamwork. That is the only way we can respond to all of our current problems: homelessness, the drug epidemic, teenage pregnancy, AIDS, family disintegration, and now particularly, with great urgency, the horror of family violence.

Through my department, we will work to support teamwork at individual, community and governmental levels. "Working together," we must develop the strategies which will stop violence against the individual and find ways by which the victim can seek a healthier and happier life.

I know that some people think there is no real cure for such social plagues as family violence. I know that many of you in your daily work face victories and setbacks. I am sure that there are times when some of you feel truly discouraged.

However, this is a very human problem, and it is one that only you and I can solve. We cannot find a vaccine for family violence. There is no surgery which will remove it from Canada's social body. It cannot be cured through laboratory research. It is a social disease transmitted from generation to generation. It afflicts whole families and attacks our social fabric. The cure is here, in this room, with people who care – with people who care too much.

Remember, great social battles have been won in the past. Civil rights, the abolition of child labour, the vote for women, universal public education and accessible medical care were all goals many thought unobtainable.

They all became possible when people who cared too much banded together, pooling their thoughts and energies.

I wish you good luck, many ideas and great success in fulfilling the only appropriate theme for this conference, that of "Working Together."

2.2 THEME I: Extent and Nature of Family Violence

2.2.1 Defining Wife Abuse: By Redefining Our Ways of Living Together

Linda MacLeod
Freelance Researcher and Consultant

When I was first asked to speak about the nature and extent of wife abuse, it seemed an easy enough task. After all, I have worked in this area for about 10 years. I was sure I could write a 10-minute speech in no time. But the more I looked at the topic, the harder it became. The longer I thought about it, and indeed, the longer I work in this area, the more challenging I find the problem and the search for solutions.

Oh, it is easy enough to give you a good definition and a quick estimate of the extent of wife abuse in our society. It is easy to tell you that wife abuse is repeated violence against a woman by her husband or live-in lover. It is easy to tell you that wife abuse takes the form of physical violence, sexual violence, verbal abuse, psychological abuse or financial abuse. It is easy to tell you that it is characterized by cycles involving a tension build-up stage, the crisis and a honeymoon stage. And it is easy to tell you that approximately one million women are abused by their husbands or live-in lovers each year in Canada. But this easy definition of the nature and scope doesn't ask any of the hard questions we all face. How often is "repeated"? If the violence is severe enough, is once enough to be considered battering? When does the tension, the ups and downs of every relationship become abuse? Am I abused? Am I the abuser?

When I use the term "wife abuse," what do you think of? Some of you may think of brutal violence, of beatings, of killings. Others may think of loneliness, despair, isolation. Others will think of helplessness, others of marital rape, others of loss of control, others of constant verbal abuse..., the permutations and combinations are endless.

And when I use the term "wife abuse," what do you feel? Do you feel anger, sadness, hopelessness, shame, energy to do something about the problem? Again, for most of us, our emotional responses are mixed.

As individuals, the process of grappling with the nature of wife abuse is uncomfortable. It feels too close to home. We may not acknowledge our discomfort publicly, or in the programs we design. But our fascination with our commitment to wife abuse stems partly from our question: Could that be me? It stems partly from our difficulty acknowledging that many families are not safe places. It stems from our discomfort at looking at the links between love, control and violence. As a society, and as individuals, the nature and extent of wife abuse and other forms of family violence is puzzling because it is tied up with a variety of emotions, expectations, and understandings. This confusion and complexity has been amplified particularly over the past 15 years because as a society, our understanding of the nature and extent of wife abuse has changed dramatically, as has our commitment to appropriate solutions. Our definitions of the nature of wife abuse have changed through our very attempts to understand it. And our understanding of wife abuse has changed through our attempts to control or prevent it.

As a society, we are currently in a transition period in our understanding of how to stop wife battering. Although we are driven by a strong, common hope to end this pervasive social problem, we have not yet reached a clear understanding of how to prevent violence against women in the home. Although some groups assert a common understanding of what wife abuse is, this understanding is not shared across the society. Many people working to prevent violence against women in the home feel that there is "nothing new under the sun," that we are at an impasse, applying the same "old" solutions to wife abuse, even though our understanding of wife abuse has changed. Others feel alienated from existing solutions, because they no longer feel confident that they know what problem they are trying to address.

In 15 short years, our definition of wife abuse and our attempts to understand it, have grown in complexity. Similarly, the number and groups of people involved have grown. And with this growth in complexity, with the multiplication of our energies and achievements in trying to reduce the impact and incidence of wife abuse have come a confusing plethora of solutions, hostilities and fragmentation across groups which share the same goals. We are at risk currently, in our attempts to understand wife abuse better and to deal with it better, of reproducing the disaster at the Tower of Babel. We are at risk of trying to build toward the same goal, but being frustrated by our differences, by our inabilities to speak the same language, by our inabilities to see beyond differing ideologies and words to our common goal and hope. We are also at risk of retreating from the challenge of trying to prevent wife abuse because it feels too uncomfortable, too close to our own lives, touching too many of our own vulnerabilities. The problem we face then, is more to understand wife battering. It is to work together with and through our discomfort, to understand wife abuse in a way which will lead to constructive, sensitive solutions.

Perhaps, by tracing the changes we have gone through as a society in our attempts to understand the nature and extent of wife abuse, by retracing the discomforts we have grappled with already, we can better understand the base of the confusion and frustration some of us are feeling, and borrow, from different ways of understanding the issue, parts of a solution which will bring us closer to our ultimate goal of prevention.

In the few minutes more I have to speak to you, I want to try to break down this impasse. I want to energize you by reminding you of the progress we have made both in terms of our responses to wife abuse and in terms of our understanding of this phenomenon. I want to remind you of the insights that I believe have been submerged over the decade, I want to point out the dilemmas and problems which have led to the barriers to fashion innovative constructive solutions. I hope that through this exercise we can begin to marry the insights of different times and different perspectives to begin to build a truly creative, shared vision of prevention.

In 15 short years, as I see it, we have gone through at least three stages, we are now embarking on a fourth, in our attempts to understand and deal with wife abuse.

At the risk of sounding flippant, I will depict these four stages, which are certainly not discrete in reality, but will be depicted as separate for the sake of clarity and brevity, in terms of the emotion that energized them and the style of solution which resulted.

I will suggest that we have gone through three stages already:

- a stage of caring and sharing;
- a stage of anger and control;
- a stage of denial and ownership; and are embarking on a fourth known by:
- questioning and pushing the limits of our institutions and values.

1. Caring and Sharing

Let's look at the stage of Caring and Sharing. In the early 1970s, the first transition houses were opened in Canada. These transition houses were opened by women, many of whom had been abused women, to help other women in their community find support and protection from their abusive husbands. These transition houses were based in the women's movement, were rooted in an ideology of empowerment, whereby women would help give other women the tools to build a life free from violence, and were constructed on a base of community, of commonalty, and sharing. Wife abuse was defined subjectively. If a woman felt she was abused, then she was, by definition. Women felt that they were "in this together," that they "shared a common problem", that "there but for the Grace of God go I."

Through these early transition house workers, we, as a society, began to learn of the existence of wife battering. A few police forces across Canada experimented with more sensitive crisis intervention programs in which social workers would accompany police to provide support to the woman and sometimes to the man when the police responded to a "domestic abuse" call. We also learned that women who are abused need protection, they need to be believed, they need to know they are not alone, and they need information and support to help them make choices to live a life free from violence.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THIS EARLY STAGE?

Can we, in our attempts to prevent wife abuse, take from this stage:

- a concern to meet the needs of women who are battered?
- a recognition of what we share with the women who are battered, or with men who batter?
- a commitment to provide programs and services that are truly community-based?

2. Anger and Control

Through the early public education work of these transition house workers, through research done by women's groups and through the filtering into Canada of information on wife abuse from the U.S. and Britain, public awareness of the problem grew rapidly in the early 1980s, and we embarked on the second stage, which I call the stage of anger and control, which I see lasting from 1980 to about 1985.

During this stage, as a society we were outraged at the widespread violence against women, even if we were still somewhat sceptical about how widespread it really was. We reacted, as a society, by defining wife abuse in a clear, dramatic way, and by forging ahead with clear, dramatic solutions.

This was a period in which physical violence was the focus, even though there was some acceptance of psychological violence as a component of abuse as well. This was the period in which we worked hard to hone our crisis response. And we accomplished much:

- Government funding of emergency shelter spaces for battered women and their children grew considerably at the federal level and in many provinces and territories. By 1985 there were 208 transition houses and emergency shelters, compared with just 71 in 1979.
- Massive public education campaigns were launched by several provincial governments, many of them emphasizing the criminal nature of wife abuse. "Wife assault ..it's a crime," became a common slogan in Ontario.
- Canada became the first country in the world to adopt nation-wide charging policies, whereby police and Crown Attorneys were encouraged to press and proceed with charges whenever there was reasonable and probable grounds to believe that an assault had taken place.
- Training programs for police were augmented to help deal more effectively with wife assault cases.
- Transition house workers honed their ability to respond effectively to women in crisis.
- And we began to learn that we couldn't look for simple causes. We were learning that abuse often coexists with alcohol abuse, that it often surfaces when a woman is pregnant or has just given birth, and that children who have experienced or witnessed abuse are likely to experience or perpetrate abuse when they become adults. And yet none of these links could be seen as definitive causes. We began to see that we had to look for multifaceted causes and multifaceted solutions.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THIS STAGE?

- A commitment to effective crisis intervention, and a recognition that effective crisis responses are crucial until we really have stopped violence against women in our society.
- A recognition of the important expertise and experience of transition house workers.
- A recognition of the important role of the police who are often the first people to reach out to a woman who has been battered.
- A strong statement of society's disapproval of wife abuse.
- A search for causes which are not just situational or individual, but which are rooted in our values and social structures.

3. Denial and Ownership

The second stage was a heady time of success. But with this success came a growing appreciation of the complexity of the problem, and so the beginning of what I call the third stage: the stage of Denial and Ownership. With greater public education came greater demands for services, and a greater realization of how widespread the problem really is. And as more women began to actively seek help, they asserted their own definitions of the problem of wife abuse, and emphasized the prominence of psychological, verbal, financial and sexual abuse as well as physical abuse in wife battering.

During this stage, it became commonly accepted that at least one in 10 women in Canada is battered each year by her husband or live-in lover, and over this period, new national statistics put this figure at one in eight or even one in seven women.
As the complexity of our definition and understanding of wife abuse grew, so did our fear of not being able to contain it, of becoming part of the problem. We fell into an epidemic mentality. We began to fear the problem was too big to handle. We began to fear that it would be impossible to remain immune from the problem, and so, as a society, we began to deny that we are part of the problem. We began to distance ourselves from the problem.

In an attempt to control the epidemic more effectively, different groups began to assert "ownership" over the issue and over the solution. And very noticeably, many of these groups began to distance themselves from the problem, to look for ways to separate themselves from people who would probably fall prey to the epidemic. During this period, the credibility of transition house workers diminished, perhaps because they emphasized that all women are potential battered women and all men potential batterers and this was just too painful to hear. During this period the influence of transition house workers was usurped, and prominence was taken over by mental health experts and social workers who dealt with "vulnerable families," "anger management," and other ways of focusing on the specific family or on individuals within the family through individual and family counselling.

Despite these negative outgrowths of the third period, there was significant growth during this period as well:

- The number of programs for men who batter has increased.
- The number of transition houses kept growing, so that by 1988 there were over 300 transition houses and emergency shelters which accepted battered women across Canada.
- Mental health and social service professionals began to take on a prominent role and interest in the area of wife abuse.
- Overall, the breadth of interest in the area increased.
- Public awareness to the seriousness and prevalence of the problem grew even more.
- Government funding continued to increase.

- Interest began to shift noticeably from an emphasis only on the crisis to an emphasis on prevention.
- With this shift, the interest and involvement of educators grew. Community coordinating committees began to grow across Canada.
- An interest in causes and precipitating factors started to surface.

But along with these positive developments came a number of further negative, divisive influences:

- A wife battering "industry" began to grow. Some service sectors became resistant to change. They fought for scarce funds and for "ownership" over the issue.
- There were divisions even within types of services, based on ideological disputes and competition for funding.
- With the new emphasis on "individual" and "family-based" solutions came the distancing of many experts, some politicians, and many members of the general public from the problem. Women who are battered began to report that instead of feeling that they were not alone when they went to many services for help, they were made to feel "different" from other women and men, they began to see the label "battered woman" as a stigmatizing label.
- There was increased ambivalence among some police, Crown Attorneys and women who have been battered toward the aggressive charging policies.
- Increased interest among disparate groups created fragmentation because too many groups began to develop protocols and programs for battered women, their children and their spouses without first agreeing on a uniform set of principles and without building on the wisdom of those front-line workers who have worked with and for battered women the longest.
- Many people working to reduce the impact and incidence of wife abuse began to feel "that the problem was just too big." Increasingly people began to voice the opinion that they couldn't accept that "battered women" or "battered men" were no different from them.

Overall, there was a mood of discouragement, of confusion, of displacement and of hopelessness, which some of you in this room, may still feel. Overall, the lessons, particularly from one stage were lost.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THIS PERIOD?

- Wife abuse has many dimensions and manifestations.
- We need the involvement of many disparate groups to create solutions which match the complexity of the problem of wife abuse.
- Exclusive ownership of the issue is not possible nor is it productive.

- Ignoring the needs of women who have been battered is counter-productive to prevention, for it alienates the very people we are trying to help.

- Services which distance the service provider from the woman who is battered or the man who batters may further alienate the people to whom we are reaching out.

4. Questioning and Pushing the Limits

And yet, through all this negativity, a fourth stage is emerging, a stage which attempts to build on what we have learned, on our accomplishments, but also on our failures, which dares to grapple with all this complexity and uncertainty. The fourth stage is a stage of questioning and pushing the limits. This is the stage that energizes this conference. This is a stage characterized by questioning. It is a stage which asks difficult questions, like:

- Are we changing outward behaviour but not addressing the values which will truly lead to prevention?

- How can we reduce the contradictions and competition currently so much a part of the current response to wife abuse?

- How can we identify women at risk of being abused and men who are potential abusers without labelling them and distancing ourselves from the problem?

- How can we push the limits of our structures and our imagination, to create approaches which will not repeat our mistakes, which will build on what we have learned over the past 15 years, and which will build on our shared goal to stop the violence?

Everyone in this room is part of this questioning. You are all part of a very challenging, exciting and difficult process. We are part of a movement to understand wife abuse, and other forms of family violence. We are part of a nation-wide search for ways to prevent abuse against women, children and the elderly in their homes.

As the brief history recounted above has revealed, this search has had its successes. It has had its frustrations. And increasingly, the search has been fraught with contradictions and impasses. But as a society we have persisted. And as we each have lived through this process, we have discovered that our search is now becoming more than an attempt to find ways to prevent a discrete social problem. Our attempts to prevent wife abuse have brought us face to face with the realization that wife abuse is but one manifestation of a number of interrelated problems. More and more people are also recognizing that these varied social problems have roots in our institutions, in our ways of living together, in our values.

Through our search for solutions to stop abuse, many of us have begun to question our social structures. We have begun to question the ways we live together. Others have looked to the resurrection of more traditional ways. We have also begun to look for different ways to help one another. We have begun a creative revolution of our social welfare system and of our ways of understanding families and communities and their potential in today's world.

Unless we understand that we are challenging our very way of living and helping one another in our search for ways to prevent wife abuse, the depth of the disagreements across groups will not be clear. Without understanding the larger picture, we may lose hope of ever finding a solution. Without understanding the larger picture, we may return to "old" solutions which do not address the real problem. Without understanding the fluidity of the nature and extent of wife abuse we will not learn from the stages we have already gone through. We will not build on past knowledge. We will not share expertise. We may resist cooperative solutions in an attempt to control the outcome.

In the next three days, the challenge we all face is to build on what we have learned in the past decade, to build on our successes and failures, to realize that the nature and extent of the problem is fluid, that we may have to accept this fluidity, that we may have to look for changing solutions. We may have to look for a prevention process, rather than for discrete preventive programs if we are ever to stop the violence.

And I suggest, we may have to return to the wisdom of the women who opened the first transition houses to base our solutions on caring, on sharing.

We may have to accept that some difference and disagreement will be a necessary component of the solution.

We may have to give ownership for different parts of the solution to different groups and interests.

We must trust one another enough to really share our knowledge and experience.

We must trust one another to work together hand in hand toward practical solutions.

And above all we may have to dare to link the problem of wife abuse to structural and value changes, to change which implicates each of us both in the problem and in the solution. We may have to dare to take personal responsibility for change. We must dare to care too much.

The very existence of this conference, the very questions posed in this conference have signaled an openness among those many Canadians involved in the consultative process leading up to this congress to care enough to work together, to care enough to consider pushing the limits of our institutions, our values and our imaginations to create truly innovative ways to prevent abuse. Through these days we will all become part of tne next stage of solutions. Good luck in your discussions over the duration of this Forum, and may the muse be with us.

2.2.2 *Child Abuse*

Andy Wachtel
Research Associate
United Way of the Lower Mainland

Defining the nature and extent of child abuse in our society is no easy task and, especially in the ten or fifteen minutes available to me this morning, beyond my capabilities. However, it is one measure of how far we have come in the two decades since child abuse resurfaced as a defined social problem that there is now wide public awareness that the issue is a complex one, that child abuse takes many forms, and that it is all too pervasive. Even one of the typical first questions that arises in casual conversation about the topic – "Do you think child abuse is really worse today than it was years ago?" – at least starts off by acknowledging a problem (and only then hope to deny it).

By way of making the topic a little more manageable, I'd like to take advantage of the special opportunity provided by the focus of this forum and consider what perspective we can get about the nature and extent of child abuse by considering it as an aspect of family violence.

Using family violence as a rubric presents both problems and the proverbial compensating opportunities. As is my nature, I'll start with the problems.

Child abuse is not always violence in any narrow sense. There are many ways children are hurt or their development compromised without any marks showing. Neglect or emotional unavailability also stunt children's growth and undermine potential. Ice leaves burns as deep as fire.

Second, child abuse is not restricted to the family. While this act has claimed more attention in cases of child sexual abuse, child abuse in general can be perpetrated by other care-givers and within any of the institutions to which we entrust our children.

At another level, child abuse is not a "family" problem. As an analogy, if a priest molests children in the parish, we do not necessarily take the position that the problem is a dysfunctional congregation. That is not to say that there is no such thing as dysfunctional families but rather that it can be dangerous to focus on the family as the unit in need of help. Blaming the victim can take many forms; there must always be careful consideration that helping the family should not be accomplished at the expense of already victimized children.

Child abuse is not a problem with the family alone – rather it is a problem of the family as one institution within the whole set of our social institutions. If the family is meant to absorb pressures from our economic sphere such as careerism on the one hand and unemployment and chronic economic marginality on the other, of sexual inequality and materialism, why should we be surprised that tensions get acted out in the family?

And finally, as I argue in the conclusion to my background paper, there is the problem that the concept of family violence dumps children's issues in with adult ones. Again, it is certainly a cliché to note that children do not have the vote but there is also a valid concern expressed in that statement.

If that is a long enough list of warnings, some of these problems are also opportunities for us here who are concerned with child abuse.

Family violence is a synthetic concept; it underlines the notion that a number of problems share certain risk factors and have similar consequences. For example, it is becoming evident that it is also developmentally damaging for a child to grow up in a family where a parent is an alcoholic or drug abuser, where other siblings are abused, where there is wife battering, where there is elderly abuse, and so on. Any of these situations can represent or closely parallel child abuse. While there are distinctions among these various problems, the similarities and commonalties are also important.

Notably, a family violence focus may represent a large enough issue to allow people to consider fairly fundamental initiatives. My background paper talks of the growth of the so-called family support programs in the U.S. and Canada. These programs aim to combat child abuse risk factors by providing parent education and support, drop-in programs, self-help groups, respite care, health and nutrition education, etc. While this in itself represents a fairly ambitious package, it requires in turn the backing of much broader programs, such as accessible health care, which even in Canada is always in question, affordable housing, day care, second chance and adult education, job training and entry programs, and so on. This solution is so fundamental and wide-ranging that it is unlikely to be initiated on behalf of a single social problem like child abuse, no matter how worthy. However, if a whole grouping of social problems call for the same range of services, political initiative may be possible.

And finally, family violence has political currency, and – not to stoop too much to punning – we need currency. A wide range of groups in our society are interested in the health of our families. While these groups diverge considerably in their interests and the nature of their analysis of the issues, at least there is the hope that national concern can be focused on these problems for some time. We need an issue with "staying power", whereas we have been working to respond to child sexual abuse for a little over a decade, for many purposes we have barely begun. In our mass media culture, where social issues are viewed as fads and anything we can't fix quickly comes to be seen as depressing and then boring, perhaps we should welcome all the novel changes we can ring on these problems.

2.2.3 *Elderly Abuse: A Brief Overview of Its Nature and Prevalence*

Nancy Gnaedinger
Consultant in Gerontology
Ottawa

Although I know you are a very well-informed audience and plenty of you have direct experience in human service delivery, I think that I should give you a general overview of elder abuse because it is the most recent type of family violence to be exposed, it's not general knowledge yet – and I assume that some of you may not be as familiar with the subject as you are with child or spousal abuse.

My perspective, as you have been told, is one of a social gerontologist. I intend to present my material in a general way, so that you, as consumers of information, can consume and interpret it in whatever way is most useful and meaningful to you, depending on your own perspective.

First of all, what is elderly abuse? Good question. There is no standard definition. But here is a comprehensive and reasonable one:

Elderly abuse is harm caused by an abuser to an adult who is vulnerable primarily or partly due to age. The abuse is not limited to physical harm but also includes psychological abuse, financial abuse and neglect.

So we have four components – physical, psychological, financial abuse and neglect. Most studies and discussions of elderly abuse include the first two, that is:

- **physical abuse** (such as wilful, direct infliction of physical pain or injury, rough handling, shoving, slapping, pinching, hitting, kicking, restriction of freedom of movement, sexual abuse); and

- **psychological abuse** (such as socially isolating, insulting, threatening, yelling at, infantilism withholding affection or denying privileges to a person).

In addition, two other elements are frequently, but not always, included in the concept of elderly abuse, that is:

- **financial or material abuse** (such as the theft or conversion of money or objects of value belonging to the elderly person by a relative or caretaker); and

- **neglect** (failing to provide necessaries of life such as adequate heat, clothing, hygienic conditions; denying social interaction).

Due to lack of uniformity in defining the parameters of our definitions and due to problems of reliably testing the various types of abuse and neglect, there are problems comparing the results of research on elderly abuse.

By the way, although the term "elder maltreatment" has been used as an umbrella term in the literature, covering various types of abuse as well as neglect, I use the words abuse and neglect because I think "maltreatment" is too wishy-washy for what is abhorrent and sometimes criminal behaviour.

ELDERLY ABUSE AS FAMILY VIOLENCE

Now, let me tell you how elderly abuse is similar to and different from other forms of family violence.

Elderly abuse shares several characteristics with other forms of family violence. For example, both victims and families are socially and sometimes geographically isolated. Victims are in a weakened, powerless and financially dependent position relative to abusers. Abuse occurs when those family members who are expected to be responsible do not have adequate resources to deal effectively with other family members. These missing resources may include some or all of the following: practical resources such as caregiving skills; social resources such as a support network or information about support services; psychological resources such as good mental health or a positive family history; and/or financial resources, such as enough money to help support an aging parent.

In addition, abusers very often have a history of alcohol abuse, psychopathology, low self-esteem and unemployment. And there is frequently a history of family violence.

Like spousal and child abuse, the overwhelming majority of abuse victims are female.

Elderly abuse is also different from other forms of family violence. Victims of abuse by their children bear the stigma of having raised a child who mistreats them. Dependency has often been reversed, with the elderly parent becoming dependent on a child, and possibly resenting it. Compounding this dependency is very often social isolation, because as older people age, their own social contacts and peer support system tend to break down.

From the perspective of family caregivers – they may be old and infirm themselves! Or they may be in a position of "double bind", that is they are expected to take responsibility for the care of both children and parents. They may regard their older, infirm relatives as a burden and an unattractive one at that, since we live in a culture that tends to view the elderly and aging in very negative ways.

Elderly abuse also goes beyond the confines of family violence. It is known to take place in institutions. Elderly people are more likely than people of any other age group to spend time in institutions. The staff are often desperately undertrained and in short supply. A result is sometimes psychological or physical abuse or neglect of the elderly.

Elder abuse, therefore, has a number of characteristics in common with other forms of family violence as well as a number of dilemmas which make it a "problem plus".

RECOGNITION OF ELDER ABUSE

Why has elder abuse caught the particular attention of the public, academics, legislators, policy-makers and health service professionals? There are several reasons.

First, the tremendous growth in the elderly population has resulted in an increase in the number of people personally and professionally concerned about aging. Second, the political power of the aged means that their welfare is seen to warrant greater political attention. They've got clout. Third, the women's movement has continually revealed that the family can be an oppressive and abusive institution. And finally, there is the fact that the state recognizes its responsibility to protect its most vulnerable citizens.

Elderly abuse is of particular concern to Canadians. Research has shown that it tends to be older members of the elderly population, those over 75 years of age, who are the most vulnerable to abuse. And, this segment of the Canadian population is growing at a faster rate than any other age group. If you add to this growth factor the shortage of training and assistance available to family and paid caregivers of the frail or impaired elderly, as well as the isolation of so many families in a vast country with a harsh climate, it is clear that the context for abuse exists.

PREVALENCE AND NATURE OF ELDERLY ABUSE

Let me tell you about the prevalence and nature of elderly abuse. It won't take long to tell you about prevalence in Canada, because it is not known. An exploratory study conducted in Manitoba in 1981 estimated that about 2.2% of the province's elderly population suffer abuse. Other Canadian studies have revealed that abuse and neglect of the elderly is a problem, but the studies' methodological weaknesses make it unwise to generalize from their findings.

As for the prevalence of elderly abuse in the United States, estimates range from 4% to 10%. But these figures should be regarded with caution. The varying definitions of elderly abuse used in the studies, the different approaches to sampling, and the fact that the American social and health service systems are significantly different from those in Canada, are all factors that weaken the comparison of social and public health problems between the two countries.

Health and Welfare Canada has recently funded a prevalence study in Canada and we look forward to hearing about their preliminary results very soon.

Now, about the nature of elderly abuse. Who is the abused? Why does it happen? Until recently, the abuse victim was typified as a widowed female, over 80, financially disadvantaged and/or cognitively impaired, with high dependency needs, living with her children.

The abuser was usually identified as a son or daughter, who may have been an abused child. The family context was frequently one where dealing with conflict and stress in a violent manner was the norm, and could have been so for several generations. In the cases of financial abuse, the victim typically had accessible assets (such as housing or money) and the perpetrator was in need of these benefits.

An overwhelming characteristic of the context of abuse, and one which was given plenty of attention in the first wave of literature, was the stress level of the caregivers. Compounding stressors were regarded by workers and researchers as the "causes" of abuse, almost blaming the victim. Therefore the "cures" were generally aimed at educating and finding assistance for the perpetrators, the over-stressed caregivers.

More recently, however, this picture of elderly abuse has been expanded. It has been found in various studies with differing respondents that spouses, almost always male spouses, are the abusers in between a fifth to more than half of the cases reported. Since many more older adults live with their spouses than with their children, this is not surprising. So in many cases, elderly abuse is spousal abuse grown old.

There is another expansion of the concept – elderly residents in long-term care facilities, old people with dementia, sometimes inflict abuse on other residents in institutions. So this is unconscious elderly abuse inflicted by other old people. What factors precipitate abuse of the elderly?

Recently, it has been found that the level of incompetence or dependency of the older person is not always the crucial variable, as was previously assumed. Instead, it is the characteristics of the caregivers that affects the likelihood of abuse, such as: their abuse of alcohol; their attitudes (that is, they hold predominantly negative stereotypes and opinions of older adults); external stress factors; emotional instability, substance addiction and dependency on the abused. Thus, dependency and deviance on the part of the abusers have been uncovered as important factors contributing to the likelihood of abuse.

Despite the apparently variable nature of elderly abuse, there are some constants. Dependent elderly women are at greatest risk of all. This is partly a consequence of demographics – that is, most of the old-elderly are women; most of the institutionalized elderly are women; most of the financially dependent elderly living with their children are women; and most adults with a history of being abused by their spouses are female.

The female face of the victims of elderly abuse is also due to the fact that abuse of dependent people in our society tends to be abuse of females. Elderly abuse is not a gender neutral phenomenon.

We do not really know what the most common form of elderly abuse is. Some research results say it's financial exploitation, others neglect, others psychological abuse. Naturally, findings vary according to both the definitions of abuse and the research methods used. I think it's more important that we are aware of elderly abuse and that we actively do not accept it. It is intolerable behaviour and in many cases it is criminal behaviour. In fact, our Criminal Code addresses most of the types of abuse addressed in the discussion paper on elderly abuse which was distributed in preparation for this national forum.

Elderly abuse and neglect is not a soft concept. It is not a problem of concern only to specialists in gerontology or policy makers and advocates concerned with family violence. Nor is it a lesser form of criminal behaviour because it takes place behind closed doors. The nature of this problem is harsh.

It is frequently criminal wrongs (and if not criminal wrongs then certainly moral wrongdoings) done to old people in situations where they are often helpless to escape, report or sometimes to even define their abuse.

How do we respond to the knowledge that elderly abuse exists? We can respond in many ways, and one of the ways is to share information, wisdom and energy, enrich each others' knowledge and perspective, pitch in – with the goal of finding common solutions.

2.3 THEME II: Education of the Public, Professions and Workers in the Field

Rix Rogers
Special Advisor to the Minister of National
Health and Welfare on Child Sexual Abuse

As I speak to you I am mindful of my limited credentials. I am not an expert in the field of Child Sexual Abuse and I do not have the benefit of many years of experience working in the field with vulnerable persons, as indeed many of you do. My comments and perspectives arise from a brief, two-year exposure to the issues, and therefore you will want to assess the merits of these views accordingly.

I am humbled by your expertise and experience. Yours is the power to influence significant change. First let me share my perspective and experience.

My life has been deeply marked by the experiences of the last two years. I had limited awareness about child sexual abuse in Canada and therefore few biases as I began the assignment.

I have been shocked by the anguish and pain of so many victims and by adult survivors. Mothers and grandmothers have recounted numerous stories to me about the impact of the trauma, and their sense of helplessness as they endeavoured to find support and understanding from the responsible professionals and systems who are designated to help and to investigate such cases. Too often sensitivity, compassion and professional competence were absent, even though there are numerous examples of outstanding care-givers across Canada. Inexperience, lack of training and a lack of professional orientation to the realities and symptoms of child sexual abuse is very common.

It is my conviction that before thousands more lives continue to be ruined, society as a whole and its responsible institutions must decide to take action and to make a moral commitment that this issue will be consciously addressed on a continuing long-term basis.

As most of you know, I was serving as Special Advisor to the Minister of Health and Welfare Canada, for a two-year period – September 1987 to September 1989. My mandate is to make recommendations to the Federal Government regarding their long-term role and responsibilities in the field of child sexual abuse.

Before addressing our theme for today, let me briefly describe the process of the last two years. Beginning in November 1987 with the assistance of Health and Welfare Canada and Provincial/Territorial Social Service Ministries, I travelled the country to meet as many key players as I could.

This represented about 75 ministries of government, hospital and police teams, Crowns and judges, front-line workers, educators, therapists, victims, offenders, and non-offending parents. I visited small towns and native leaders, institutional settings, professional associations and the list goes on. This pattern has been continuous through May 1989. I have met about 1,600 persons from coast to coast.

I am finding out how much I do not know about the agony of thousands of victims in Canada and the many problems related to our support systems, jurisdictional and professional competition, and inadequate public and professional education.

Four specialized workshops were convened in the topics of:

- Primary Prevention
- Legal Issues
- Treatment Issues
- Aboriginal Concerns

A consultation with provincial/territorial government representatives was held in Montebello, and two meetings were held with national professional associations and specialized institutions and finally a National Strategy Workshop on Solutions has been held in Ottawa at the end of May.

Through all of this I have benefited from continuing consultations with our Federal Interdepartmental Steering Committee of 14 ministries, and day-to-day contact with the Family Violence Prevention Division of Health and Welfare Canada.

This division has also provided me the logistical and administrative supports to enable my work to go forward. The total experience has left a permanent imprint on my life.

I came at the task with naive assumptions that we were dealing with a serious but limited problem. My assumptions have been shattered. My experience is similar, I believe, to the general public's view of the situation. Canadians are having a hard time believing that abuse is widespread, much of it within families and involving persons in position of trust. Also it seems clear that the agony of these problems is accentuated in rural and remote communities by such factors as geographic isolation, less resource people to help, and accentuated by poverty, unemployment, alcohol and drugs.

The sources of influence on me have come from a variety of sources:

- caseload increases over the past five years
- reports from adult survivors
- CBC Morningside
- personal accounts
- gang-rape
- videotape of 3 boys in care
- comments from street youths related to prostitution, runaways and pornography
- experiences of educators in high schools in talking about sexual harassment, date rape, etc.

Although my focus has been child sexual abuse, I believe there are similarities to other vulnerable persons in our society, namely women, the disabled, our native peoples and ethnic minorities.

Before addressing the theme in a general way I am mindful of very special constituencies for which additional perspectives must be identified along with the general perspectives I would like to suggest. This means that for each of these constituencies a more particularized strategy is required, involving in each case the participant population:

- Remote and rural populations in Canada (non-native), geographic isolation, costly transportation, limited public communication, and the limited presence of professional human resources affect greatly the patterns of public education as well as the delivery of services.
- Remote and rural aboriginal populations who are surrounded by many special compounding social and economic problems, and for whom the normal approaches to public education or delivery of services is simply not adequate.
- Aboriginal citizens who live in urban areas, who are alienated from mainstream society and who are, in general, under-served.
- Immigrants to Canada, including refugees, whose background and experience may be quite different from our laws and norms related to family nurturing. To the best of my knowledge they receive little or no orientation to the Canadian context for family living, before they actually arrive in Canada. They may carry the trauma of abuse and violence before receiving help.

THEME OF EDUCATION OF PROFESSIONAL AND FRONT-LINE WORKERS

One of our profound problems, from my observations, is that our professional groups as a whole still do not recognize that an issue such as child abuse is widespread or serious. The handful of professionals in each professional group who deal with the issues day to day tend to be highly sensitized, but there are lots of professionals who have little or no contact with abuse and who have little understanding of its potential devastating impact.

This raises the question of the role of professional schools to provide broad orientation for all professionals, as well as more specialized training for those who are going to be directly involved.

Professional societies as a whole and professional schools are not giving leadership in this area. Furthermore, no professional school I know of does multidisciplinary training, and yet this is the new front-line reality. We face urgent requirements for ongoing job-related interdisciplinary training programs to help professionals understand where their contribution fits into the scheme of things, and why professional jealousy and competition is counter-productive. Many professionals who are specializing and carrying the load, feel little support and recognition from their other professional colleagues.

Generic professional training is not adequate preparation any longer, for in the field of abuse, assault and acts of violence there is a whole new aspect of professional expertise required.

Ongoing professional training and support to front-line workers in remote areas should be accessing the technical systems which are used by the medical profession. The social services networks and police networks should be benefitting from these distance learning techniques. There are new audio visual materials being developed every day, and they lend themselves to a multidisciplinary audience.

- There are many skilled volunteers and para professionals – who are adult survivors who have received extra training and are the lifeline of support to current victims and their families. Professionals must learn how to work with and support this valuable resource in their work.

- Another area of consciousness raising for professionals is that therapeutic relationships must be humane and very much victim-oriented.

We are learning more about involving victims in their rehabilitation programs and that the ability to relate in a humane way is just as important as professional expertise.

- Finally an observation about professionals at their best – the multidisciplinary team relationship seems to foster a greater appreciation of individual professional roles and contributions. Perhaps this modality can be accentuated in our strategies for the future.

Before leaving the question of education for professionals and front-line workers we should acknowledge that there are a variety of places where training is being provided:

- The Institute for the Prevention of Child Abuse.
- The Justice Institute in Vancouver.
- A growing number of courses in community colleges.
- Initiatives by various departments of the Solicitor General regarding training for police officers.
- The Department of Justice Canada in relation to Bill C-15.
- Funding by Health and Welfare Canada for a variety of training conferences out of the special funds for child sexual abuse.
- Medical Services Branch and Department of Indian Affairs for training programs among aboriginal groups.
- The work of the Nechi Centre and private therapists with a variety of native groups.

The momentum is growing but it must be joined with leadership and commitment from the professions themselves and by the professional schools.

Well now, on to the education of the public.

There are probably several themes which fall under this heading but let me identify two or three which I feel are foremost.

The first area is really public education which includes programs within our school systems around "bad touch", sex education, life style education and preparation for parenting.

These are usually viewed as prevention activities as well as preparation for adulthood. There are many excellent program resources and many educators as well as community specialists involved.

Our school systems and teachers and community agencies are to be commended for some very good programs which often involve parents as partners which further strengthens the potential impact.

I know too that education professionals continue to study how such programs can be refined to make them more age specific and more integrated into the school curriculum. There are also initiatives under way to evaluate the impact of the programs.

The programs however, are not universal, but rather ad hoc; sometimes because of resources and sometimes because parents object to any education which is "sexual" in nature. It is becoming clear that these programs should be universal.

Another aspect of public education has to do with parenting training for some who are now parents and who are having difficulty coping with the task of parenting. Self-help groups are one of the means of helping this constituency, along with a variety of community groups, including churches and agencies, who offer programs for their constituents. Public health nurses and other professionals are often in a position to provide vital assistance.

A continuing difficulty is that many parents who may need the most help are often the most difficult to reach and are often absorbed in a variety of other problems.

Many experts I have talked with point to the importance of the immediate public education task, but ultimately feel that the long-range task is to tackle underlying social attitudes and values related to male and female sexuality. For it is the socializing influences of children which produces adults with particular values and attitudes. The historical patriarchal society has tended to condition males to be sexual predators and females to be sexual victims. Perhaps this is overstated but I am convinced that underlying unhealthy sexism is something which must be changed. The sexualization of children in our advertising, the proliferation of child pornography and the reinforcement of the male macho model is not helping us to develop into a more nurturing society where vulnerable members are respected and protected. It seems to me that male and female sexuality can coexist in a more egalitarian style and that in fact we are moving in this direction, but we need a more conscious effort with more explicit strategies for getting there.

I think this is clearly the most difficult area: the agenda with a 20-year time horizon. However, unless we really change this area, we will not eradicate child sexual abuse or other sexual assaults.

Community Development and Community Coordinating Committees are crucial parts of a prevention strategy.

As Linda McLeod has so ably outlined in her background paper on wife abuse, community development strategies and the work of community coordination groups is crucial to building community awareness and a basis of common understanding and concern for the issues we are talking about. This is probably an essential forerunner to the tougher task of values and attitude change and the socializing experiences which impact on children.

Building an effective action program for prevention involves a series of interconnected strategies and activities.

Basic to underlying significant change is the area of social values and attitudes and this is also the toughest challenge.

Thinking of the future, it is my belief that every society needs to have a sense and vision for the future; this in part is the glue that holds people together and also provides the energy to tackle major issues.

Ours is the first generation in Canada which has clearly identified through our laws and increasingly through attitudes and beliefs that vulnerable persons in our society shall be protected and valued as full members of society. This includes women, children, the disabled and minority groups such as our aboriginal peoples.

We are at a critical juncture in our history, if through growing awareness and shifting values we can insist on a sense of equality for all.

This overall mission and sense of direction has yet to be articulated into a broad vision for the future. This is perhaps the next step.

The hidden, long-standing problem of the sexual abuse of children is unfolding dramatically every day in the media, and society is traumatized to learn that many trusted adults, including parents, teachers, custodians, care-givers and clergy, have been victimizing children. It is time to recognize that these problems are real, but they can be addressed. I strongly believe that shared leadership is an essential strategy – including governments, professionals, community based groups, volunteers and private enterprise. Long-range and lasting change will require the concerted and inclusive support of all. This year may be a particularly appropriate time to renew our efforts on behalf of children in Canada.

A United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child was first proposed by Poland in 1978 on the eve of the International Year of the Child. A working group of 40 member countries, in which Canada has played a significant role, has drafted the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is almost certain that the Convention will be adopted by the United Nations General Assembly later this year, on the basis of a resolution co-sponsored by Canada. Canada is thus honour bound to sign and ratify the Convention as soon as possible. However, before Canada ratifies the Convention, it will be our responsibility to implement legislation and social policies which reflect the principles of the Covenant. Thus a special and unique opportunity will be presented to us soon.

Finally, let me return to the theme of the power of this assembly to influence the future. Although we all recognize the important role that governments, institutions, organizations and professional societies play in shaping attitudes and events, ultimate change begins in the heart of each individual.

The force of individual attitudes, commitment and determination is really the power that ultimately affects organizations including governments. Let me challenge each of you to search your hearts for the kind of influence you can have, immediately, in shaping a better future for children, in all your spheres of influence. The time is right! The time is now! God Bless.

2.4 Banquet Address

Hon. Kim Campbell, P.C., M.P.
Minister of State for Indian Affairs
and Northern Development

I am very pleased to be able to join you this evening. I want to speak to you briefly from the perspective of a Member of Parliament from Vancouver Centre; from the perspective of the Minister of State for Indian Affairs and Northern Development; but mainly, I think as a human being who is appalled at the level of violence which occurs in the family setting.

Usually when I speak publicly, I like to begin my talk with a bit of humour or something light, but there isn't really anything very funny about family violence or anything light that one can say about such a subject.

But I was reminded when we were working on this speech of perhaps one of the most famous openings of a novel in literary history, and that was the first line of Tolstoy's Anna Karenina: "All happy families resemble one another but each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way."

I think that in terms of the subject that you are dealing with in this conference, family violence, there are many variations on that particular theme. It is a very difficult issue to deal with but there are many, many tragedies in our society and many, many unhappy families, each unhappy in its own way; but many of them unhappy, because of violent relationships that break down the traditional ties of trust and love that we think of as characterizing the family.

Every culture has faced violence within the family, probably since the dawn of the human race.

Family violence is a pervasive problem that has no boundaries. It affects women, men and children of every age, race and religion, of every socio-economic level – from generation to generation.

Yet, for years, this problem remained hidden. Why? I am sure each of us can think of a different reason why family violence has been a taboo subject. But one fundamental reason is because it occurs within the privacy of the family, the basic unit of our society – an environment we assume to be safe.

Family violence does not respect international boundaries – the problem is world wide, as our special guests tonight will attest. This leads me to another observation – family violence is not a women's issue nor is it just a simple matter of finding new techniques to control anger or provide emergency shelter for victims, although these are vital. And family violence is not just another issue to be referred to the courts.

Violence affects each of us, because all of us are its victims – the children, the women, the men, the elderly, the disabled. Family violence is rooted in our social environment, our communities, our families. Violence has been an integral part of our culture – a culture which has tolerated child abuse and wife battering for years. Violence touches people who struggle with the pressures and frustrations of life. Violence touches the vulnerable and sensitive side of relationships so crucial to human interaction. This is a totally unacceptable part of our culture.

Family violence is a symptom of several underlying concerns – the pressures of unemployment, alienation, rapid change, culture shock and others. Aboriginal people are no exception. Family violence is a serious problem among Indian and Inuit people.

There has been mounting evidence over the past few years of family violence in aboriginal communities. For example, although aboriginal women comprise only about 2% of the total female population in Canada, 15% of the women who went for help to transition houses in 1985 were aboriginal women.

Not unlike other Canadians, the family is of utmost importance to aboriginal people in this country. This is a society where the family is the very foundation of the culture – a mechanism for survival. The extended family system, the community, are central to the aboriginal way of life.

So there is strong pressure to keep this family cohesive and the community free of the shame of disclosing family violence problems to others.

And yet the family and aboriginal culture in Canada have undergone some very particular strains. I would like to mention just a few of them.

When I was elected to the B.C. provincial legislature in 1986, one of the first conferences that I attended was one sponsored by the Native Homemakers of British Columbia on the apprehension of children. It was a revelation to me in the course of attending that conference to hear Indian people speak about what residential schools had done to their family life and their capacity to create healthy family environments. When Indian children were taken from their own homes to residential schools they were forbidden to speak their own language. They were forcibly dislocated from their cultural traditions.

But in addition, they were taken away from an environment where they could learn to understand the relationships between family members of all generations. When they did return to their homes, they often felt alien. They had been living a different kind of life, speaking a different language. They were out of touch with their own culture and traditions.

Many of them have said that they did not know how to be parents because they were taken away from their parents and taken away from their homes.

This is a legacy that Indian communities are dealing with now in Canadian society as the young people who attended these schools try to recapture the values and the patterns of behaviour that they did not have an opportunity to observe in the natural way. Of course, it is an experience that others have had, not as a result of being in residential schools, but perhaps through family break-up. But there is a particular type of experience and a particular poignancy about the experience faced by Indian children in those schools.

Another problem that I observed, as a provincial member of the legislature whose government was responsible for delivering certain social services, was a great deal of suspicion and antipathy between the people who lived on the reserve and those who were supposed to help them deal with their problems of family violence, breakdown, abuse, etc.

Many of those professionals only came to a reserve when there was a problem. They only saw families in crisis. Therefore, they came to have contempt for the people they were supposed to help because they did not have an opportunity to get to know the community and to understand that there were strong families. They did not have an opportunity to learn how to use the strength of the community to help those who were in trouble.

In addition to other disadvantages, those Indian families who were in difficulty often did not get the kind of support and help from the helping professions that they required because there was not that empathy, that understanding from those who were supposed to help them.

That is why there is such a strong move now to have Indian communities provide their own special services. This means having services provided by other Indian people who understand them culturally and who will take the time to get to know the strengths of the community, not just look at the crisis spots.

Finally, of course, there is the whole struggle for cultural identity that is so fundamental to having a sense of self and being able to deal with the strains of modern society. In my own province of British Columbia, there is a very noteworthy example of a community that decided to pull itself up by its bootstraps and deal with the problems of alcoholism. That is the Alkali Lake Band. It was a very difficult decision but it was a community decision.

In many Indian communities, in order to create that strength they are looking back at their own cultural traditions and to their own religious traditions. They are trying to find that sense of self-esteem that is necessary in order to be able to find socially acceptable and constructive ways of expressing emotions rather than venting that kind of inarticulate rage and unhappiness at those whom they love.

And so Indian societies are very good examples of some of the difficulties that many people face in our country but they have a set of unique problems and they are unhappy families who are unhappy in their own way. Yet the question remains the same for aboriginal people as for other Canadians. How can we, as the theme of this conference suggests, work together to prevent family violence?

I am happy to say that, in our own way, at Indian Affairs and Northern Development, we have started to tackle this problem.

The department will be spending $750,000 per year, until March 1992, and the Medical Services Branch of Health and Welfare, another $250,000 per year to address the special needs of aboriginal people. The two departments are working together on similar projects and are jointly administering the funds.

The first step in setting up the joint program was to create an advisory committee on family violence and I believe some of the members of that committee are here at this conference. The committee is made up of Indian and Inuit representatives; it advises the department on programs and funding priorities for community-based projects.

In the first year, 82 projects were approved for funding. These include public awareness initiatives, conferences, workshops, training, needs assessment, and community and program development projects.

An additional $400,000 per year, until 1991, has been earmarked under the federal child sexual abuse initiative.

The department has been working with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC to most of us) on "Project Haven", through which CMHC received $22 million for the creation of 500 new crisis units for abused women and their children.

Over 30% of the letters of intent for "Project Haven" have been received from native communities. CMHC has agreed to make units available for battered Indian women and their children residing on reserve, which is extremely important.

The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development will cover the operating costs of these Indian-operated shelters. Over the past year, the department has also played an advocacy role, ensuring that Indian people benefit from components of the family violence initiative carried out by other federal departments.

Family violence is not new. However, it is receiving more attention, more coverage, more interest and we hope more help. In fact just today in my riding of Vancouver Centre, it was announced that a contribution of $21,191 has been made to the Women's Research Centre to research and produce an annotated bibliography on the link between issues related to violence against women and children. The bibliography will help create a better understanding of the causes, responses and prevention of child abuse, child sexual abuse and wife assault.

We, at Indian Affairs and Northern Development, are determined to assist Indian communities in finding their own solutions with regard to family violence.

And the federal government is committed to finding solutions to family violence that exist among the Canadian population at large. We must persevere, because the cost of not addressing the issue is just too great to bear.

Finally, as I was saying earlier, family violence has no boundaries. Other countries like Canada are trying to find solutions to this serious problem. I know they are interested in the inroads we are making and we are willing to share work that is being done outside our boundaries.

I want to thank you for inviting me to share this evening with you and wish you a very successful seminar and I thank you for your concern and your commitment to this extremely important social issue.

2.5 THEME III: Prevention of Violence and Protection of the Vulnerable

2.5.1 On Preventing Family Violence: Sex, Spirit and Serendipity

Lorraine Berzins
Church Council on Justice and Corrections

I work for a group of Christian churches and I want to say right off the top that the church carries a great burden of responsibility for having helped to produce the problem of family violence in our society, and for maintaining the silence around it. For the past few years, as the evidence of the magnitude of the problem has become more visible, we have been asking ourselves some deep, probing questions about this: **HOW COULD WE HAVE ALLOWED THIS TO HAPPEN? WHY HAS IT BEEN TOLERATED FOR SO LONG? HOW COULD WE HAVE THOUGHT THIS WAS ALL RIGHT?**

At the Church Council on Justice and Corrections, where I now work, this questioning has led us to produce the kit which some of you may be familiar with. The purpose of this kit is to get ordinary people in the community to talk about their lives in the society we live in today, and make connections to this problem of family violence that we want the federal government to help us prevent. We have come to realize that we can no longer pretend that family violence is a question of a few individuals who need fixing. We know that our efforts to keep the problem focused on individuals only, has led to doing more violence to them and others: in institutions, in foster homes, in bureaucratic systems of all kinds. The very fact that this keeps happening and that we don't seem to know how to do anything good without doing it in a way that leads to more violation and abuse points to a very painful reality that I think it's time we all face: our whole community needs fixing – our whole way of organizing our socio-economic and personal lives together.

I have been very inspired by what is happening in aboriginal communities around this as they move to prevent future violence by facing the fact that their ability to live as a community needs healing. They give me courage to suggest to you today that this is what we need to talk about too. The problem of family violence is rooted in a pervasive set of values that has got hold of us all, and what we really need is a national searching of conscience and consciousness about this. But social change won't come about if all we have is rhetoric about this. People need to see it in their own lives. I would like to talk about what I see as the community's responsibility for prevention, and then describe the kinds of things I think the Federal Government could do to help engage us in this task.

The discussion papers prepared for this National Forum do an excellent job in laying before us the fact that the most extreme forms of abuse can no longer be thought of in isolation from psychological and emotional abuse – in which they include such things as "inappropriate control, rejection, coldness, extreme inconsistency" (by an authority figure), such things as "insulting and infantilism," such things as failure to deal with someone as "a person of worth, dignity and value." These forms of abuse are so pervasive in our society that I dare to ask the question: which of us here today has not been abused in this way – by our parents, by our teachers, by a boss, by a priest ... by the people who have had power over us? I dare to ask a further question: which of us has not abused another in this way – with the sternness of our voices, with humiliating judgments, with harsh demands and reprimands –

wherever we have power: over our children, our spouses, our younger siblings, our subordinates – those that we feel are weaker than us, have less status than us – in short, whenever we can get away with it! Now, don't get me wrong: the fact that we all may fall into this from time to time is not what I see as the problem. It's the fact that when we do it from a position of power; we usually think it's the morally correct thing to do.

For what many people are coming to realize as we reflect on these issues in our lives is that family violence is rooted in a deep belief, that it pervades our whole culture, that it is necessary, in order to have ORDER, for some people in our society to dominate others – to have a hierarchy of power, and that it is all right for some people to use power to control others, and to use force, if necessary, to maintain that control. This belief is deeply entrenched. We can hardly imagine having order without it. It has allowed men to dominate women, parents to spank children, one class or race to devalue and control another. It unleashes competition to gain and maintain power in the hierarchy. And we have come to believe that this is morally right because the "other" is of inferior rank in our hierarchy of values - due to gender, age, race, physical, mental or economic difference – whatever distinguishing characteristic we can use and get away with. And that force, even violent force, is sometimes justified for those who dominate to maintain that domination. This "ethic of domination," if you will, has long been accepted in our society as the basis for order. The "right" to use violence, if necessary, to maintain that domination is based on our belief that it is morally right to do so for the sake of preserving order, and is made easier by the belief that the other is of inferior ability, responsibility or status.

It is my deep conviction that as long as we maintain this kind of belief system as the foundation of our social order in the most benign situations, we are on the slippery slope that connects us all to the most extreme cases of abuse – to the husband who believes that there will be chaos in his household unless he can maintain domination of his wife and kids. Abuse is not an outburst of anger. Abuse is the right to control with coercive force. In a surrounding society where economic and social structures award high values to ownership, competitiveness, aggressiveness and control, all values which help condone and perpetuate violence – then why not in the home too? In a society where violence is accepted in all but its most extreme forms – to ensure that you do what I want you to do – then why not in the home too? As long as we feel that there needs to be a hierarchy, then we will always be looking for someone to devalue so we can be superior to an inferior: "I'll help pick on the other so I don't get picked on myself." And as long as we feel that the devaluation of the other gives us permission to dominate them and use force if necessary to maintain that domination – physical or systemic force – we will be maintaining the conditions that foster abuse.

Are we just going to let the problem of family violence get used to make lots of money for lawyers and therapists? Or are we prepared to do something to prevent the conditions that keep fostering it? And if we are, then we can't just do something for individuals. We have to do something about the social and economic structures we live in, and about the way we interact with each other in them.

Before we discuss what we could do, and what the government could do, let's think first about what we want. What do we truly wish for ourselves? It starts with me, my family, my responsibility to influence those who govern.

What do I want most for myself and those I care about? Why do I need to feel safe in all the above situations?

- Why do I feel it's O.K. to spank my child? What happens when my kids' teachers humiliate them behind closed doors?
- Why am I so afraid to raise this with those teachers?
- Why are my kids so reluctant to have me raise it?
- Why is my role as worker in the labour force more valued than my role as parent?
- How would I feel if they wanted to open a group home for the mentally retarded on my street?
- Why am I so afraid to tell my neighbour I'm concerned about the way she treats her kids when she's drinking? How come we don't know how to tell people this in a way that communicates caring and help, rather than judgment and scapegoating and ostracism? Today, we seem to feel it's "kinder" to call the police or the Children's Aid. Granted, there have been bad experiences in the past. Neighbourly meddling can be stigmatizing and cruel (another example of something good that has been used to oppress others). But have we really lost all personal ability to influence each other's values and respond to each other's needs?

We have to accept the fact that human beings are capable of destructive behaviour, whenever they can get away with it, whenever no one is watching or seems to care about the person we're doing it to. Knowing that we all have it, and that capacity is not going to go away – how can we mobilize the good to help each other, and not to indulge in our capacity for evil?

If we're going to have family support programs, they can't just be "HOW TO" services for parents. If we really want to "empower and strengthen" adults in their roles as "parents, nurturers and providers" – as has been suggested in the discussion papers – then that has implications for our social and economic structures. Family violence prevention has implications for how the work world is organized, for its personnel policies and practices. It has implications for economic justice so that no person's economic survival is dependent on the livelihood of another. It points us to the need for changes in policies that affect housing. It points us to the need for sensitization to racial-ethnic relations, racism awareness, discrimination against persons with physical or mental differences.

Prevention must attack this big picture and our means of responding to the problem must reinforce the message that we know the cause is linked to this big picture. We must make those links visible for people who don't see them yet. The Federal Government can help us by providing national moral leadership to engage the whole community in the process of exploring these links and beginning to see them for themselves in their own lives.

Before I turn to what specific kinds of things I think the Federal Government could do to help us with this, I would like to briefly name two particular areas that I think need special attention in our soul searching about the prevention of family violence: how we want to be as sexual beings, and how we want to be as spiritual beings.

"Sexual life in a patriarchal culture: Look what they've done to our song"... Which woman here today has not been stared at lecherously by a crew of construction workers? Worse still, what teenage girl has not felt like a dismal failure as a sexual being if this is in fact not happening to her when it is happening to her friends? What man here has not at some time haw-hawed his way through locker room talk with the boys? As Rix Rogers commented yesterday, our sexuality is predatory sexuality, and an entertainment commodity. In some of our best marriages, we all know that we use each other as objects. And I dare say that men don't have the monopoly on patriarchy in this area. Women are in fierce competition for sexual power over a man. In very deep ways in this area, women don't trust women either.

Underlying this sexual malaise, I believe, is a problem that brings me to my next point, and this is very delicate. I think we've lost touch with our spirit, and it's easier to violate each other because of this unawareness. One of the papers even refers to this as a form of abuse: "The failure to provide our children with 'symbolic' means needed for their optimal development." I think it's understandable that this has happened. We've been alienated from our own spirit by a patriarchal church that has used spirituality to dominate us. We have come to feel oppressed by our rituals, instead of liberated and healed, as the aboriginal communities are finding. I suggest that it could be helpful to us, in the prevention of family violence, if we can dig deep, beyond the patriarchal images, for the Spirit of Freedom in us that allows us to say with great conviction: "No one has a right to violate me." Now that's self-esteem....

Now I have some suggestions for what the Federal Government could do. First, it can provide moral leadership in identifying the issues, not the jurisdictional issues, but the clear message about what we believe to be the root causes and what we believe to be the most effective means of reducing the conditions that contribute to family violence. Secondly, it can provide incentives, to promote awareness of the contributing factors – make the links visible – and to encourage innovative strategies and alternatives to reduce their occurrence and effects.

I would like to suggest how the Federal Government could do this, even within more or less existing budgets and current operations. The lack of new money is no excuse for inaction, when what is needed most is the political will to send out a vigorous message.

The Federal Government is itself responsible for many government departments that have jurisdiction over matters that affect the social and economic conditions contributing to family violence. In addition, it is itself an employer, responsible for personnel policies and practices and working conditions that affect families. In all these areas, it regularly reviews and approves budgets and program activities. I believe that the Federal Government should challenge all these departments that come under its jurisdiction to analyse how their sphere of activity impacts on the conditions that contribute to family violence and come up with innovative ways to adjust what they do so as to increase their contribution to the reduction of these conditions – with the understanding that budget requests that can show a contribution to this effort will be looked upon more favourably than those that don't.

This same principle could be applied in all the areas in which the Federal Government exercises ongoing influence: in dealings with provincial governments, in the funding of NGOs, in tax breaks to corporations.

In preparation for this exercise, however, managers and decision-makers need careful sensitization – but sensitization that includes workshop experiences that give personal awareness of the subtle, insidious and painful dynamics of domination, oppression and discrimination. This is the kind of educational experience that women's groups and grassroots community organizations are very skilled in designing. I think we should recommend that all public decision-makers that come under federal jurisdiction, including the Members of Parliament themselves, undergo such experientially designed sensitization workshops to raise their awareness of family violence, of the surrounding issues that can affect its prevention, and of alternate models of power and conflict resolution that are less dangerous to the vulnerable in our society – so they can make better public decisions to help us prevent family violence.

I can almost hear you smiling. You think I'm dreaming in technicolour. We'll never get MPs to go through an experience like that! We'll never get government departments to go to that much effort for family violence. But what I'm talking about is do-able and it doesn't require a lot of new money. And it could have an effect on the prevention of family violence. So perhaps your reaction means we honestly don't believe yet that family violence is important enough to make us unsettle and adjust the social and economic structures of our government. And so we have to start with that painful, honest truth. I challenge you in this morning's discussions, if this indeed is your thought, to start with the question: I don't think that family violence is important enough to be worth unsettling the functioning of government because... I think we could learn a good deal from our answers about where we're really at on this issue.

2.5.2

Eunadle Johnson
Executive Director
Thompson Crisis Centre

Let me begin by saying that I do not usually prepare for presentations way in advance as it is part of my work on a daily basis but, because I wanted to impress this body of "professionals" and "experts" I did some preliminary thinking about what I would be saying at this conference. Then two very significant situations happened to change not my thinking but part of my focus relating to the presentation. The two significant situations I am referring to are:

- The brutal murders of Mary Anne Reid and her two sons in Winnipeg on June 10, 1989.
- A call from a contact person in a small community north of Thompson referring a woman who was being abused by her partner to the shelter.

Of course, this is a regular occurrence but the significance of this was that the woman had 10 children, ranging in ages from one to 12 who would accompany her to the shelter.

In the first situation, I would like to discuss various preventive measures that could have led to a different outcome for this woman and her children. Let us look at the responsibilities of the community, the media, the families, the friends, the individual and of course the law enforcement and the people we elect to government.

The community responsibility relates to the situation in Winnipeg and the statements made by most people in what they consider to be the ideal community. "How could it happen here? It is such a nice neighbourhood, the lawns are well kept." One man was extremely annoyed his lawn was trampled on. Then the focus shifts from the "here" to "him." "He had a drinking problem." "He was unemployed." "He had a painful intestinal problem." "We knew them but they did not circulate much in the neighbourhood."

There seem to be some contradictions here. While all these people knew about his problems and focused on that, they seemed to have forgotten who was killed. Then there were individuals and others in the system including neighbours who recalled that there was ongoing violence in the home and the children were being abused. The children told friends, the police were called, in regards to the abuse of the woman and her children but nothing was done.

Why, as in so many situations of violence in the family, do we not insist that it is a community concern and responsibility and it will not be tolerated? Will that nice neighbourhood in Winnipeg listen the next time a woman in their neighbourhood is being abused? Why is not abuse of women a part of Neighbourhood Watch or all the other crime prevention programs set up to safeguard the community? Is it more important for neighbours and friends to look out for your property to prevent theft and vandalism than it is for neighbours, friends and family to look out for and assist abused women?

We have a legal and judicial system where though the statutes and laws says it is a crime, it is not enforced. The community, media, government and individuals still see this as "family violence". The word "family" means of a unit or group "closed." Does this also mean do not interfere? As long as we have that attitude, we will be meeting here again and again trying to find solutions.

Do you sense anger? Well, there is. Nine women died in Manitoba this year so far at the hands of their partners. The women I work with are stressed out. They are frightened for themselves, for the women in shelters and for the women who do not access shelters.

The protection of the "vulnerable": Let us take a look at the woman I mentioned earlier from the small community with ten children ranging in ages from one to 12. Why would not that community recognize it would have been easier to remove the abuser and form a protective circle to provide support for that woman in her community? Whether or not there is a shelter in that community, what should the community have done for the woman? Where were the people who enforced the laws? I am not saying the number of children a woman has, defines whether or not she should be moved to a safe place. I am saying it is ridiculous to uproot 11 people when the one person responsible for the crime is free to do as he pleases. The community and the police should have recognized their primary responsibility was the protection of the woman and her children.

Prevention of violence and protection of the vulnerable is one and the same in that when you are preventing violence you are also protecting the vulnerable. It is the women and children who are the large majority as the survivors of abuse. We are back again focusing on the community responsibility reporting acts of violence, speaking out, forming neighbourhood groups that will not accept violence. Men who are aware of other men who abuse their partners or powerless people (children or elderly) in their families, should confront and condemn. We must as a community urge government to adopt some effective policies and give the mandate to groups who actively provide programs and services in shelters and crisis centres to work with women and their children so that they can educate their communities. Abusers' groups that are now in place or are being developed must provide some method of measuring the success of the group. They should liaise and work with the women's shelters to determine if behaviours have changed. The abused woman must feel safe to report if there is a reoccurrence of abuse.

I see mentioned in this theme vulnerable groups (aboriginal, disabled and ethnocultural groups) and as a member of one of those groups (visible minority woman), I would like to say that our communities are governed by the same laws as are all Canadians. If we all agree that violence is systemic to our society then why don't we discuss it in those terms. Living and working in northern Manitoba, I am often asked or told that we must see a lot of native women in our shelters. Because, they tell me "there is so much violence among natives."

Let me speak again from practical knowledge and focus on the constituency of black women and violence. This is the information and experience we have and these are the reasons why we must be more visible in forums like those. More native women, more disabled women should be here. Black women are doubly victimized by racist and sexist oppression and in some instances the Women's Movement tended to romanticize the black female experience rather than discuss the negative impact of that oppression. When you acknowledge in one breath that black women are victimized and in the same breath emphasize our strength or the idea of the matriarch, you imply that though black women are oppressed, they manage to circumvent the damaging impact of that oppression by being strong.

When the strength is being discussed, the reality is being ignored. To be strong in the face of oppression is not the same as overcoming oppression. Frequently, observers confuse the issues. As with the native women of this country, our identity has been socialized out of existence. When black people are talked about, sexism is used to deny the issues of concern to black women. When women are talked about, racism is used to deny the issues of concern to us. Those issues include violence, physical, emotional, mental and sexual abuse. We are not an "issue" but a "constituency"; there must be a recognition of some cultural needs as they relate to service.

Where services are being developed, they should be culturally sensitive and that can only happen when we are involved in the development and delivery of those services. We would expect the legal and justice system to recognize that we also believe abuse is a crime. We would not and do not want to see the courts and legal system assume that there is a difference between "a white employed male with a drinking problem who abuses his wife" and "a black unemployed male beating his woman." When the laws are enforced there should be no difference in the disposition of case of say a native versus a white male. The focus should be placed upon the degree of violence.

Last June, $40 million was announced but most of that money will go to researchers and experts on family violence who will suddenly spring up all over the country. I have a saying that every psychiatrist in his right mind will apply for research funds. What about the women working with abused women and their children to provide programs, to discuss alternatives and offer safety? Where are our proposals and where is our funding? Don't you see, our very existence is education and a means of prevention through the service we provide.

The reason I accepted this invitation to speak at this conference was threefold: part education, part lobby and of course always protesting the injustices. The education is to learn from this Forum and provide a sense of understanding of what it means to be a front-line worker and that our contribution is valid. We are the experts. We are the professionals. Part lobby – to be a voice for the women I work and network with, and to raise consciousness regarding funding issues. Most of all, to lobby for abused women, children and elderly who say "stop the violence." Protest – I will always protest as long as we have capitalism, racism, sexism and all the isms which contribute to violence against women. We must protest because women like Mary Ann Reid and her children of Winnipeg are dying from violence.

2.5.3 *The Disabled*

Jillian Ridington
Researcher
DAWN (DisAbled Women's Network) Canada

At its founding meeting four years ago, DAWN Canada (DisAbled Women's Network – Canada) identified violence against women with disabilities as a key concern, together with self-image, parenting, employment equity, sexuality, and isolation as they pertain to women with disabilities. These issues had not been addressed by either the women's movement or the disabled consumers' movement.

In 1988, I was the researcher on a DAWN Canada project which investigated the needs of Canadian women with disabilities. A questionnaire was designed and distributed to 1200 Canadian women with disabilities; 245 completed questionnaires were returned. In addition, I conducted approximately 50 interviews with individual women, or with groups of women, across Canada. I am now working on a follow-up study, doing in-depth interviews with women with disabilities who have been victims of violence. Together with the work on rape crisis centres and transition houses that Shirley Masuda is doing concurrently, the interviews will result in a manual for crisis workers which will, we hope, improve the accessibility of services.

Included among the 50 questions we asked in the 1988 questionnaire were some basic ones about the rape, assault, and abuse of women with disabilities. From the 245 women who responded, we learned that:

- 40 per cent of all respondents had been raped, abused or assaulted.
- 64 per cent had been verbally abused.
- Girls with disabilities have a less than equal chance of escaping violence.
- 53 per cent of respondents who were disabled at birth or during childhood had been abused.
- Women with disabilities have little access to services for victims of violence.
- Women with multiple disabilities have been multiply abused.

Although the findings of these surveys will, we hope, apply to the majority of women with disabilities, it is important to note that the respondents and the women interviewed are an elite group among women with disabilities. They were contacted through DAWN chapters and other disabled consumer's groups, through women's centres, and through organizations working with people with disabilities. No women who currently live in institutions were in the sample, although there were many who had spent part of their lives in them. Yet if a large proportion of this group had been victims of violence, the incidence must be at least as high for other women with disabilities.

We know from the Report of the Committee on Sexual Offenses Against Children and Youth, (1984: 1-2), commonly referred to as the Badgley Report after chairperson Robin Badgley, that one in two Canadian females will be a victim of unwanted sexual acts at sometime in her life; for four out of five of those of us who are molested, the first experience of such acts will occur before we reach the age of 18. Badgley's statistics include sexual threatening, unwanted touching, and exposure as well as more overt sexual acts, as does my current research. The interviews I am now doing show that the odds against surviving childhood without experiencing abuse go up for girls with disabilities. As Dick Sobsey stated in a recent study:

People with disabilities are more likely to be subjected to sexual abuse and assault than their non-disabled peers...

The exact degree of risk... appears to be at least 150% of that for individuals of the same sex and similar age without disabilities (Sobsey 1988a:1).

One reason abuse occurs is because there is great opportunity for it to occur. As females, we are raised to be "nice". As individuals with disabilities, we are taught to be compliant (Sobsey 1988b:6). We grow up with a lack of self-esteem that makes us easy prey for men who want a female who will do anything they are told to do. For girls with disabilities, this subordinate and submissive role often starts in their relationship with their father.

Generally, the women I interviewed described themselves as being closer to their fathers than to their mothers. Mothers bear the burden of caring for a child who has a disability, and our communities lack supports to enable them. Further, they may blame themselves, or be blamed, for having given birth to an "imperfect" child. Perhaps it is easier for a father, who is away at work for much of the day, to be patient and loving for a few hours in the evening; he does not have to cope 24 hours a day. He comes to represent the longed-for autonomy, the connection with the desired but feared, and perhaps unattainable, outside world. One woman I interviewed who moved out at age 16 because her presence was threatening her mother's health, remains very close to her father. Although she sees her mother infrequently, her Dad drops in, "just to visit, and to keep me company." She told me that she got her sex education from her father, "we learned part of it at school, then I'd come home and we'd talk about it." There is no disclosure of overt incest here. Yet the fact that the normal mother-daughter relationship is so skewed it is the father, rather than the mother, who tells his daughter about sex could perhaps imply some subtle, psychological form of incest. Certainly, it provides a situation in which it could occur.

Many girls with disabilities lack information about sex; they know only what their parents choose to tell them. Unfortunately, many men can not conceive of intimacy with a female that does not include sexual contact – even when she is their own daughter. Girls who have disabilities may require personal care which requires touching of the genitals long after the father of an able-bodied child would have reason for such touching. The meaning of such touches may be unclear to an uninformed child. When the girl is very vulnerable and lacks sophistication, she is an easy victim. It is easy to see why girls and women with disabilities are frequent victims of incest and/or sexual abuse by male relatives and care-givers.

MULTIPLE ABUSE AND MULTIPLE DISABILITY

Sadly but predictably, it seems that multiple disabilities make us even more vulnerable. Among the women who returned the DAWN Canada questionnaire, those with more than one disability reported violence more frequently. To examine this, we grouped women according to the standard seven categories of disability: mobility; hearing impaired/deaf; visually impaired/blind; developmentally disabled; learning disabled; psychiatrically disabled; and hidden disabilities.

The rate of violence for women with a single type of disability varied greatly. For women with an aural or a visual disability, it was 22 per cent, but samples were small (nine women in each category). Samples were also small, but rates were high, for women with a single psychiatric or hidden disability. Sixty percent, or three of five women, with psychiatric disabilities had known violence. Four of the six women (66 per cent) with one hidden disability had been victims. The largest number of women (118) with one disability were mobility impaired; 37 per cent of them had experienced violence.

Women who are developmentally disabled are particularly vulnerable to violence. Eleven of the 18 women with developmental disabilities in our sample (61 per cent) experienced rape, abuse or assault. That figure may still be low; some respondents with developmental disabilities did not fill in their own forms, and may have been reluctant to admit victimization to the person who filled in the form for them. Given that it is our intimates who abuse, it is possible that those who assisted with the questionnaire also committed the violence.

Sixty respondents (one quarter of our sample) had two types of disability (e.g., mobility and visual, or developmental and aural). Twenty-seven of them (45 per cent) had been abused, raped or assaulted. Thirteen women had disabilities in three categories; eight of them had experienced violence. Only three women had more than three types of disability. All had been victims of violence: one had been raped, another abused, the third abused and assaulted.

Multiple disabilities also seem to correlate with multiple experiences of violence. Of the 10 respondents who had been abused, assaulted and raped, five had double disabilities and three had triple disabilities. The other two had mobility impairments. Two women had been raped and assaulted; both had two disabilities. Twelve women had experienced both abuse and rape; four had two disabilities, one had three, and another more than three. Admittedly, the samples are small, but the trends are worthy of more detailed investigation.

WHO ABUSES US

Women with disabilities experience violence at the hands of those they should be able to trust: their husbands, boyfriends, and parents; their care-givers; their neighbours and relatives. Spouses and ex-spouses were the most common assailants; 37 per cent of the women were victims of wife abuse. Fifteen percent had been abused by parents. One woman had been abused by her son. But 28 per cent of the women who reported violence said the perpetrator was a stranger.

It is important to make it clear that, for a woman who has a disability, abuse by a care-giver or an attendant is as traumatic as violence committed by a family member; the same factors – dependency, vulnerability, betrayal of trust – come into play.

Less than half of those respondents who experienced violence reported it. "Reporting" includes telling parents, a teacher, a doctor or a spouse about the incident. Only 29 per cent of the reports involved the police. Almost as many reports were made to doctors, care-givers, counsellors, teachers and hospital officials and to parents, as were made to police.

The relatively high reporting rate may also reflect the fact that our respondents were not as isolated as are many women with disabilities. The majority were women who would have sources of information and support. They are also, obviously, women who have a means to communicate with us. As Sobsey notes, people "who experience significant communication deficits...would be unlikely to report abuse, particularly if not specifically asked" (1988a:6).

Reporting did not necessarily mean getting help, or gaining validation. In most cases, it didn't. We asked women who had experienced violence, "Was the incident dealt with satisfactorily?" Most of them told us it had not been. Only 27 per cent answered "yes" to this question; 31 per cent answered "no". Seventeen percent were "not completely" satisfied. And, sadly, 10 per cent answered that they were not believed.

The most common reasons women gave for not reporting were fear (64 per cent of women who said they did not report the abuse) and dependency (55 per cent). One woman wrote, "I was threatened." These reasons are similar to those given by women without disabilities who are victims of violence. We know that, "Assaulted women keep their abuse to themselves for two reasons: fear and shame." (Support Services for Assaulted Women; undated). Fear of retaliation is often well-founded; a husband may beat us for reporting, a stranger may return to violate again. Fear and dependency can be linked. Reporting a husband often means loss of financial support. Reporting a service provider resulted in loss of services for some women. And some women stated that "I tried, and I was not believed." Women who were children at the time of the abuse, particularly incest victims, feared "breaking up the family." In such cases, it is often the victim, rather than the abuser, who is removed from the home for her "protection." Many girls with disabilities had been institutionalized; for them the fear of banishment is very real.

Five women, or 12 per cent of those who did not report said that they had "No one I trusted to tell." Isolation, lack of support services, and no knowledge of viable alternatives make leaving even more terrifying; how can a woman who needs help to get up in the morning, visualize looking after herself and her children without a partner?

Feminists realized over 15 years ago that women needed support to get out of violent marriages, or to overcome the trauma of rape. Women with disabilities could benefit even more from such services than our non-disabled sisters do. But they are less available to us.

Transition houses and rape crisis centres are now well established across Canada. Since women with disabilities are vulnerable to violence, these services should be available to them. However, only 10 per cent of our respondents who stated they had been victims of violence went to a rape crisis centre or transition house. Only half of that small number (five women of the 99 who experienced violence) were accommodated. One woman who had been raped met with a rape crisis centre worker at an accessible location, away from the inaccessible centre.

When services are accessible, women with disabilities use them. The Seattle Rape Relief Development Disabilities Project reported that it dealt with over 300 disabled victims of sexual abuse in a two-and-one-half-year period ending in 1984 (McPherson 1984). No such outreach project exists in Canada. We would welcome one.

Women who have speech, hearing and/or visual impairments, women with developmental disabilities and women with multiple disabilities can have difficulty attracting help or resisting during sexual assault, and difficulty in identifying their assailant. Women with disabilities often have very few resources and may have had little opportunity to understand the justice system. Because women's services are inaccessible to us, we are among those who are least likely to have the support of skilled crisis workers after an assault and throughout a court case. Without the support of skilled workers, reporting can be as devastating and traumatic an experience as the violence itself.

Disabled victims of violence who do come in contact with the justice system can expect to find it confusing and unsympathetic. Law enforcement officers may be difficult to reach. Police departments may not have a Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD); if one does exist, it may not be plugged into the emergency system. Women must have access to the legal system, and abusers must not be left to violate us again, or to abuse other women. However, legal proceedings are complex and women who undertake them should know what they are getting into, and have support while going through the courts.

Courts and legal aid services may be located in buildings without wheelchair access. Crown counsels may refuse to consider charges "well-founded" if the victim is not articulate, well-dressed and "credible" in their eyes. Most Crown counsels are men. Some may take the attitude that women with disabilities are not sexually desirable, and that the victim should be glad someone "paid attention to her" (McPherson 1984).

Only 27 per cent of the women who reported violence felt that it had been dealt with satisfactorily. Our current study will delve more deeply into the question of reporting support for victims and follow up.

LEGAL ISSUES

Assault, including sexual assault, is an abuse of power. Sex between an adult and any child, whether she is disabled or not, is assault because the imbalance of power is involved. If the adult is a parent or care-giver, there is also a betrayal of trust.

In any sexual act where one participant is in a position of power over the other, true consent cannot be given. Consent, or the lack of it, distinguishes sexual intimacy from sexual assault. This is a complex question with regard to women with severe disabilities. For women who are institutionalized, women who are dependent on others for personal care, and women who have been given no education about sex, the issue of consent is problematic. It may well be impossible for them to protest against the abusive actions of a person they depend on emotionally, financially and physically.

In 1988, amendments were made to the Criminal Code to prohibit sexual contact between a young person and someone in a position of trust. However, such measures don't deal with the problem of women who, due to their disability, remain to a greater or lesser extent dependent on others throughout their lifetimes. Obviously, dependency which makes it difficult to refuse sexual activity, also makes it hard to lay complaints against a sexual abuser. If a woman has once consented, albeit not in free will, a "sexual history" with that abuser begins accumulating.

When a woman finally gains strength or has support to rid herself of the abuse, this history could work against her. Reporting means that she will have to appear in court, face her abuser, and in the case of sexual assault, perhaps defend herself against accusations regarding "any previous sexual activity" with the accused. This presents an overwhelming hurdle. Since 1983, there has been some protection for victims built into the Criminal Code. Testimony regarding the sexual history of the victim with persons other than the accused has not been allowed.

However, this gives no protection to victims who have been abused by the same person – a spouse, a father, a care-giver – over a long period of time. The limited protection we now have is being challenged in two cases heard simultaneously by the Supreme Court in 1989. DAWN Canada has participated in consultations with LEAF (the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund), which is intervening in these cases, Regina v. Seaboyer and Regina v. Gayme.

True consent must be informed consent. Many women with disabilities receive little sex education, or none at all. Specific, clear education on sex education which includes information on how to avoid unwanted contacts should be made available to all women with disabilities. Special programs should be designed for women with specific disabilities; for example, information on tape and/or in braille for women with visual disabilities, and information in a simple, graphic form for women with developmental disabilities.

Women with disabilities must be protected against abuse and sexual assault. However, we must take great care not to deny the right of women with disabilities to enjoy and express their sexuality. That right has been denied far too often. Women with disabilities have been sterilized against their will, and have been given dangerous drugs like depo-provera to control their sexuality and reproductive capacities.

Historically, women with developmental disabilities have been denied the right to sexual expression. The old Section 148 of the Criminal Code, which restricted them from consensual sexual activity, was not repealed until 1983. People working with sexually abused individuals with intellectual impairments have stressed the importance of assessing ability to consent on an individual basis. The relationship of the participants – i.e., equality rather than dependency, or dominance-submission, should be the primary criterion.

It is the responsibility of society to prevent the abuse of persons with disabilities and to protect those who have been violated. All crisis, counselling and legal services for abused women and children must be completely accessible to women and children with disabilities. We will never know the true extent of violence against women with disabilities – nor even that against all women – until we can offer them an alternative to violence; a safe life, without pain and degradation.

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2.6 Business Involvement and Family Violence

2.6.1 Introduction

Jacques Langevin
Vice-president, Human Resources and Corporate Affairs
Avon Canada

I am very pleased to participate this afternoon in this National Forum on Family Violence on behalf of Avon. Why is Avon here? How did we come to participate in this conference?

We join together with you at this Forum because as a company, Avon Canada has a corporate concern to serve the needs, wants and aspirations of women and I think that, this is a surprise to no one, given the business we are in.

But, we also strive to provide not only products and services to many women across Canada, but to also provide them with a part-time earning opportunity. We also feel that we must increase our societal involvement.

As a member of the direct selling industry, our distribution channel has afforded us a unique opportunity to support our belief at the grass-roots level and to participate in local community programs. To date and through various methods, we have taken advantage of this opportunity.

One example is our October 5, "Avon Day of Commitment," held each year. On this day, thousands of Avon representatives reach out into their own communities to give support where it is so urgently needed. Last year our representatives across Canada pioneered such projects as food and clothing drives, fundraising for burn victims, accident victims, even organ transplants and scholarship programs. Some representatives, as I understand, in some communities, also got involved in the issue of family violence.

Now Avon is not here because we necessarily think we are better or at the forefront of most corporations. We're here because we're interested and we care and are looking for a place to start in, and with, issues that directly concern our business and the people that we seek to serve through our products.

We realize, however, that we've just begun to scratch the surface in supporting these kinds of initiatives and our communities across the country.

Frankly, we are here to discover how we can further act, on our belief in this commitment through the support of initiatives that are national such as this one and also in other programs.

As a member of the corporate community taking part in this Forum, we are also here for two distinct reasons. Uppermost, we're here to learn about how we can help particularly as it relates to the common problem of family violence be it for the elderly, children or women.

Having reviewed this week's agenda – and it is very broad – and having listened to the plenary sessions and from having listened to a lot of what was being said in my particular group, I can assure you that the experience had been instructive and enlightening and frankly quite sobering. Secondly, we're here to offer somehow, some tangible corporate support following the Forum.

Why? Well, because I think we've been sensitized to the issues and believe that others have to come together to help overcome all kinds of violence.

I think that it is crucial that members of the corporate community join in with governments and voluntary organizations because this is a problem which is virtually everywhere.

It is in our businesses – we have a lot of employees, we have 40,000 representatives across this country – I'm sure many of them are affected. We all need to work together to find a common solution that really is so urgently needed. However, that solution relies in large measure, to coming together with an element of trust and co-operation.

We as a company, believe in values that I've heard about here in our discussions. This afternoon, we're going to hear some more from Rita Karakas but this morning, it was clear that values such as caring are at the fundamental root of the solution.

I think that a lot of companies do care – they just need to be educated.

With this in mind, one of the things that Avon Canada feels that it can contribute in terms of education is that following this forum, we intend to distribute the results of your deliberations, in summary form, to 750 corporate leaders across the country because I think that's where you've got to start.

It's a first step and we look forward to working with the Department of National Health and Welfare in order to see what other ways we can come up with in order to try to bring these groups together. Thank you.

2.6.2 Luncheon Address

Rita Karakas
Executive Director
YWCA of Canada

I am particularly pleased to be speaking with you this afternoon because I represent an organization which some of you might believe, does not reflect our reality. I think that what Avon is trying to do is to demonstrate their reality – their vision and mission-driven reality – and that is understanding women and working for women. I've been asked to speak to you today on the corporate cooperative behaviours – of the voluntary sector, the government sector and the corporations. There are many ways of describing this behaviour. Many of us know of partnerships and of the need to work together.

An organization that I worked for, for many years, the United Way/Centraide Canada used to talk about "people helping people." This is what I'm here to talk about with you today. Some of you might find my points too pragmatic, I dare say neo-conservative. Some of you might find my comments unrealistic. I do know though from my long experience in the voluntary sector that what we represent in this room is the collective power of democratic speech and movement.

What we are in this room is more than just grass-roots, more than just front-line services. We are people, women and men, committed to helping one another because, "but for the Grace of God go I."

One in eight of us women are abused. One in four of our daughters will be abused in some way. So before I go any further I would like to clarify that I do not appreciate the term "family violence." And I will not be speaking from that perspective. "Family violence" is a bureaucratic euphemism to talk about battered, beaten up, abused women and our daughters.

I will not deny that there is spousal violence. I do not deny that there is an ever-increasing amount of elderly abuse, and it's shameful. I do not deny that young boys are abused both emotionally and sexually. But I will not accept the political rewriting of what is the fact – it is mainly women, mostly women, and we pay the price. There is no such thing as family violence. There is everything like battered women and abused children.

I stand before you as the Executive Director of an organization which I am very proud to serve – the YWCA of Canada and the emphasis is on the "W". We have over 100 years of history in Canada. The first YWCA was established in St. John, New Brunswick, in 1870, to empower women through education, and by providing them with choices and options for their lives, and we do the same today.

We provide residences and shelters. Over 100,000 bed nights a year for women and their families is what the YWCA brings to your communities. We also bring you, **Take a Break** programs for young mothers with infants so they can break away from the cycle of abuse. We are the people who bring you adult education, job skills and re-entry, daycare programs and wellness programs.

We do this with one mission alone - the empowerment and self-determination of women and girls. You educate a man, and you educate an individual. You educate a woman – you educate a nation. That is our belief.

We work like you, in the grassroots, somewhat more comfortably I might add, but we are in the front line just like you are. And a lot of you in the shelter and transition home movement know us because you started with us.

I have just returned from our 28th quadrennial. We had a strategic planning convention. We, I am proud to say, adopted an operation mission statement that confirms the YWCA as an organization run by women for women and working towards the empowerment of women in Canada and that we are committed to not only serve, but being part, with you, working towards and advocating for, social change and insisting on social justice in this country.

Men are not the enemy. Corporations are not the enemy. Federal Government, whoever is in power, is not the enemy. There are no enemies in this business. There are people within communities who don't recognize one another, who don't recognize our common interests and our ways of working together.

I'm not going to repeat today the statistics on the more important incidence of family violence. You, in this room, are the experts – you know the individuals behind the statistics better than I. You know their names and their faces.

Corporations have discovered the voluntary sector. We would like to welcome them to the reality of Canadian society. Corporations and government have discovered that people getting together to make a change in their communities do a lot better, a lot faster, with a lot of ownership. We welcome them to the Canadian reality. I don't say that sarcastically because the welcome is very real. The more of us at the table, the better it will be.

All of us approach family violence – and many other issues – from our own personal perspective, a perspective developed through personal experience, belief systems, temperaments and work experiences. We all have our own agendas – hidden and sometimes not hidden.

We filter what we see through this perspective and we have to work pretty hard at times to see things through the eyes of someone else, let alone through the eyes of the Chief Executive Officer with a blue suit.

Like attracts like, we live and work in communities within communities. You all know the joke that there are only 400 Canadians in Canada and everyone else is from central casting. I am convinced that there are only 400 Canadians in all of our distinct communities: 400 academics and in social work; 400 in social policy; only 400 in family and child abuse and we all know each other. But we don't know the other 400 elsewhere, and we don't know how to bridge to each other. There are 400 corporate CEO's that one must know, but we don't know who they are. The challenge, as in this meeting, is to get those 400 talking to one another. We know what we want and we know how to get it within our own communities. The challenge is to do that with the other communities.

Women have developed our strength as collectivity. Some people will tell you that women's organizations don't know how to work together: that we ourselves are victimized by our own leadership and followership difficulties; that we attempt to work in collective models, not duplicating male hierarchical corporate structures, and that we don't succeed. They show us NAC as the example. I disagree with that. I say we do succeed; we just don't know how to take pride in that success, we don't market it, we don't broadcast it and we don't believe we're doing anything extraordinary because after all the term "Am I my brother's keeper?" should be "Am I my sister's keeper?" and the answer has always been "yes". We have created over 260 shelters for women in less than five years across Canada. If that's not success, although it may not be the kind of success we want, then I don't know what is.

We know for a fact, that domestic dispute calls are second only to motor vehicle accidents in our police force daily lives. We know for a fact that 75 per cent of men who abuse their partners have witnessed violence between their parents. We know that 80 per cent of children are present during an assault within their families, usually on their mother, and we know for a fact that these children have similar support and counselling needs as the victims of child abuse. Knowing all these facts, and more, we are struggling daily to provide quality services and to tackle in some way what we know is the essence of the issue - preventive, educative services.

Those of us in this room who are front-line workers owe it to our sisters, their children, and their families to broaden the base. Gone are the days when we could afford to do it alone. We owe it to ourselves and our daughters of the future to bring corporations into the room and to make them stay and to make them pay.

We must become more interested in our choice of allies and partners. There are no enemies. There are different policies and different strategies. Providing shelter services to battered women and their children, fighting for a comprehensive child care program, and pay equity must appear on the corporate sector and broad public agenda of the 1990s and we must put it there.

We may be skeptical, as some of you I'm sure are, about working with corporations. We may not know how or where to begin. Many times we have felt that the corporate sector has not seen its interest as being ours. They have not seen themselves on a consistent basis as having a role to play in the development of a more just society. They have not seen that their ongoing economic productivity lies in the well-being of their employees. And if they have seen this, more often their response seems to us, like throwing money at a problem. And we all know that money is only one part of the solution. We need time, talent, energy and attention.

Let me in pragmatic terms suggest why the issue of family violence and wife abuse and battered children must be placed on the agenda of Canadian corporate boardrooms. It is very pragmatic and has nothing to do with altruism.

Women in the 1980s have become the backbone of the Canadian economy. Fifty percent of the workplace presence is a female one. Seventy percent of total employment growth in the past decade has been female. Fifty percent of women with pre-school aged children are in the workforce and we still don't have a comprehensive daycare policy. And we still earn approximately 60 per cent to 65 per cent of what men earn. Women are employees in ever-increasing numbers in Canadian corporations. We are the consumers and producers of corporate products. We are increasingly the executives of corporations and help manage the day to day business for corporate Canada.

In order to reach a working partnership with corporations on such "non-sexy" issues as wife, child and family abuse, we must speak to the mutuality of our strengths. We must not go to the corporate table asking for charitable donations. We must not go to the corporate table asking for approval.

We must go to the corporate table from a position of strength and equal power. We who are in the business day to day, empowering battered women to regain their lives, must empower ourselves in our dealings with corporations. Corporations have a great deal to learn from us. And we, of them. We must be accessing their public affairs dollars, their marketing dollars, and not fall into the competitive game of charitable donations. We must build coalitions and ask with one voice, and ask in such a way, that the answer "no" is not acceptable.

If we are full partners we must resolve some of our difficult issues. For example, the YWCA was invited to chat with Avon about a year ago. Before we went, we called up Dun and Bradstreet, we looked up the Independant Directorate out of New York to check about their investments in South Africa, we looked to see who their bankers were, their boards of directors, what were their lending policies to minorities, what were their animal testing policies and only then, after we had all these answers, did we go to talk to Avon. And you all have to do the same. We at the YWCA own shares, and we vote with those shares. We are fortunate. Corporate relations does not mean sleeping in the wrong bed, but it does mean sleeping carefully with your partner.

We must agree with the corporations on how we will deal with dissent. If you have a corporate sponsorship, or corporate involvement in your program, don't believe that means you can't speak out. Just like if you're getting government funding, it doesn't stop any of you from speaking out. We must agree ahead of time so that the terms of the contract are clear and clean. There are people at both ends of the table. And we must be aware at all times that it is people that make the difference.

We must expect the corporations to bring us into the workplace. That's where the most progressive efforts of the corporations on this issue can occur. We are their majority of employees across Canada. We must insist that they distribute self-help literature and information on our services and how they can be accessed. And when the demand for our services is too high, we must insist that they go with us to the appropriate authorities to secure safe guaranteed funding. They have to be part of the solution.

Another way to help corporations to help us on this issue is to sponsor public awareness programs. Many of us have concerns about what that does at the other end: the lack of services available; we're already burned out. But we cannot let that stop us. Education is one of our best tools in this society. And Canadians respond well to long-term lifestyle education. ParticipAction Canada is a good example. There must be a way to make it clear that a man who abuses his wife and infant son, cannot get a suspended sentence while in the same city a man who abuses his pet gets a jail sentence. And it is corporations that have the expertise in public awareness. And we need them as allies.

Finally, we need corporations to support our sisters who are going through the difficulties of leaving an abusive, battering situation. Supporting women who are going through this process can make the difference between success or failure when leaving an abusive situation. We need employers who understand, who are willing to give time off to go through the process, even if it takes a year, and who nurture this individual by guaranteeing her, her job afterwards. We need to set up family assistance programs. And we need to help the abusers. If one in eight women is battered, then there are an equal number of men doing the battering. We have to talk to these men. If we can't find them in the tavern, I don't know where we find them, then we can find them in the workplace. They are the uncared for, victims of wife abuse.

Before I give you examples of successful corporate relationships, let me finish my list of dos and don'ts with these guys. You need to know the names and faces of the CEOs, and their spouses. Very often the pet charity of the CEO is what gets the bucks. You need in your local community to be members of the Chambers of Commerce. Small business is our best ally. You need to manage your budget, monitor your finances as if you were a business, a business operating with a huge heart. You can't afford deficits, baked cookie sales, bingos. Those days have got to stop. But in order for them to stop we have to have fiscal management practices. We've got to get the bank manager on our finance committee, sticking to giving us the cash flow on prime, and letting him not make us pay on each cheque transaction. That can be his contribution. That can only happen if you know who the bank manager is. And we've got to get to know these people. We've also got to assume that they share our concerns, because there "but for the Grace of God" go their daughters or their wives or their sisters. We must maintain the corporate links and network them as we network with each other. We must maintain solidarity with each other. And we must be prepared to listen to their constructive comments. And when they're not constructive we have to talk back to them, "that's not helpful, thank you very much".

You all know the example of the "Imagine" campaign with the Canadian Centre on Philanthropy. Many businesses are heading a voluntary move to help Canadians give more, corporations give more of their time and their dollars. Another example which everyone in our business talks about is "Give a Buck for the Lady." Lee Iococa raised a dollar, every time an American Express card was used, for the Statue of Liberty. I wish the "Give a Buck for the Lady" was "Give a Buck for a Lady and a Child." Imagine what we could do. That's what we have to go for.

You can remember Ronald McDonald Houses across Canada at all children's hospitals. A great corporate entity. Who loses? No one. Is Ronald McDonald coopting that hospital? Not at all. They're providing a much-needed service and getting an appropriately equal corporate benefit and that is fair ball. We just haven't learned to play that ball game yet, but we must. The transition report, the SARC exercise in Ontario. It was good to see Conrad Black speaking out for welfare reform. I bet you that was the easiest part. Get a CEO, give him a speech, get him to the mike and he'll say the right thing. What's going to be interesting to see, is how Conrad Black follows up on the report and stays involved.

We have to build that coalition. They aren't built nationally though. Sure, the YWCA of Canada can talk to Air Canada, but it would be more effective if you were talking to your local travel agents, the workers at the airport, etc., in your community. That's how to get to Air Canada. It's much more effective if six local transition houses get together and zap Air Canada in their local community. That's where we make the difference.

People make up this room, the corporations, government, the voluntary sector. There's one single large corporation we have to collectively go after in this coalition – that's the Federal Government. It's the largest, single employer of women in this country. And they, as a corporate entity, not just as funders, have to be held accountable for their pay equity practices, for their day care, child care services, and their education on wife abuse, and child abuse practices. A lot of changes have taken place. We have the clout, we just have not looked at the Federal Government as a corporation. We have seen them as our funders. We've seen them as the ones who've brought us together in this room. What do they expect from us? What do they want us not to say?

In summary, I happen to believe that we in this room are what Canada is all about, and that includes corporations. We are all people. Put us all in this room, drop the barriers, drop the labels, and look at what we can do. We owe it to our sisters and our daughters. Thank you.

2.7 THEME IV: Justice in the Intervention and Prosecution of Family Violence

Ian Glen
Assistant Deputy Solicitor General
Police and Security Branch

This afternoon you will be returning to your workshops to discuss the criminal justice system's ability to respond to family violence. This is an area fraught with difficulties, but I think you will agree that there is potential for innovative approaches that can have substantial impact in reducing family violence.

The Federal Government, in its most recent speech from the throne, confirmed a commitment to reduce violence in the family and the abuse of children. The government is determined to advance social justice through increased public protection in ways that are humane, just, effective, and respectful of individual rights and freedoms. These overriding principles guide the government in the development of criminal justice policy.

As you know, the Federal Department of Justice is responsible for developing overall criminal justice policy. Working with Justice, the Solicitor General Canada's responsibilities touch many areas of social justice through its national role in policing and corrections.

However, to describe the criminal justice system simply in terms of the police, the courts and the penitentiary system belies its essential complexity.

It may even be misleading to think of it in terms of a system at all. The criminal justice system can be thought of as a network of individuals, each working towards the common goal of a society free from the ravages of crime. Everyone in this room is, in this sense, a part of the criminal justice system. How effectively we coordinate our efforts will determine our success in putting an end to the suffering caused by family violence.

Underlying any discussion of criminal justice in family violence is this basic question:

How can the criminal justice system reconcile the victim's need for protection, society's condemnation of the offence, and the positive value that we place on the family?

As we search for the answer to this question we find ourselves facing a whole new array of questions: Should the police change the way they respond to domestic violence? Is post-charge diversion the correct approach? What alternatives are there to traditional sentencing practices? Do the courts have a mandate to compel treatment? How can we improve treatment for offenders?

These are a few of the difficult questions facing you as you return to your workshops this afternoon.

In the correctional sector we are working to develop effective treatment models for offenders involved in family violence. Both institutional and community-based programs are being developed and existing programs are being improved. In recognition of the cycle of violence, we are concerned with the families of offenders and we are working to break that cycle. An interesting feature is that correctional workers are part of this search for better services.

We, in the police sector, are constantly looking for innovative ways to improve our service to the community.

Earlier this year the commissioner of the RCMP, Norman Inkster, issued a directional statement to all members of the force. In it he stated, "...members should view themselves as 'catalysts' who activate, motivate and guide communities to contribute to solutions to the problems of victims of crime."

Often victims are at a loss as to how to get the help they so desperately need. Who can blame the victims for being reluctant to submit their personal anguish to the scrutiny of the criminal justice system? They feel trapped in a catch-22; unable to figure out how to stop the violence without tearing the family apart. And yet, often the police are the only agency available when violence strikes.

The important realization here is that the police can contribute to and assist in finding solutions to crime in the community. However, without the involvement of that community, social problems leading to crime will remain unsolved. The interaction of the police with the community must be a two-way street.

Commissioner Inkster has made it clear that he supports the formation of "citizen advisory groups." Such groups open the doors for input and interaction.

It is important for the police and the criminal justice system as a whole, to recognize the needs of communities and families, yet it must remain clear that assault is a crime.

In December 1983, the RCMP and Crown prosecutors in the Territories were directed to adopt firm charging policies in wife assault cases. Since that time provincial attorneys general and police forces across Canada have introduced similar policies. We all know now what a profound effect this move has had.

It has been suggested that a tough stance by the police and the courts discourages victims from reporting. They fear that their families will be torn apart and that they will be left without support to put their lives back together.

Some initial evidence exists to suggest that the laying of charges by police can, in certain cases, cause repeat offending. However, if the needs of victims are to be addressed, it is crucial that attention be given to what happens after a charge is laid.

It is in this that Commissioner Inkster's vision of the role of police as community "catalysts" comes into play. Ideally police intervention is tied to services for victims, training and awareness programs in the community and treatment programs for abusive men. However, in many communities across Canada, these services just do not exist.

The federal initiative, under the leadership of the Department of Health and Welfare, places a premium on comprehensive responses. With the announcement of the federal initiative, $40 million dollars were provided for enhanced programming by six funded federal departments over a four-year period. These new funds have resulted in: the construction of first-stage housing, intensified research, the development of innovative pilot projects, and enhanced information sharing. Many of these efforts have been directed at finding new approaches to challenges facing the criminal justice system.

Jill Wright, who spoke to you this morning, is coordinating one such program in P.E.I., and Jennifer Mercer, who will speak to the issue of support and treatment tomorrow morning, is the coordinator of another program in Newfoundland. The Federal Government, in cooperation with provincial and local governments and non-governmental organizations, will continue to support community-based initiatives across Canada.

Alongside the development of model programs, the government is committed to enhancing our understanding of the particular needs of Canadians in rural, remote and isolated communities. Research under way in northern Alberta will examine how services and programs can be modified to best make use of the strengths of small communities.

We must be sensitive to the needs of the wide range of multicultural groups in Canada. We must continue to deal with the particular problem of victimization of the disabled and elderly.

While we often are faced with finding expedient solutions to immediate problems, we must develop long-term preventive strategies. Training of professionals and education of the public are priority steps in this direction. Solicitor General Canada supports the development of such strategies on a national scale; for ultimately only through prevention will the cycle of family violence be broken.

2.8 THEME V: Support and Treatment for Victims and Offenders

2.8.1

Maggie Hodgson
Executive Director
Nechi Institute

Elders, ladies and gentlemen, I welcome you to join me in a journey today. The native people journey through their stories and I will tell you one.

It is important for us who deal with family violence to be able to see it with new eyes:

Mr. Wolf was walking through the bush and he ran into the rabbit. He saw the rabbit, singing his Indian song...thum...thum...thum...and singing his Indian song. As the rabbit sang his song his eyes popped out of his head and danced and swirled through the air, dancing to his Indian song. Thump...he stopped singing and his eyes popped back into his head. Wolf said, "O.K. Mr. Rabbit, you are wonderful. Please teach me your gift," and he gave tobacco as his gift to the rabbit. Rabbit said, "Are you responsible?" Wolf said, "Yes, oh, yes." "O.K." Rabbit said, "Here is how to sing and play the song on your drum." So, Wolf learned, "but..." Rabbit said to Wolf, "The only thing is you must only do this gift three times." Wolf said, "Yes, oh, yes." Wolf left the rabbit and sang once and his eyes danced outside his head. He sang twice, the same thing happened. He sang three times and again success. Now Wolf came to Ottawa and wanted to show his gift and he said, "Just one more time, I do so want to show my gift to my friends." He did and when he stopped singing his eyes did not pop back into his head. He said, "Oh, my, oh, my." He ran into Mr. Mouse and he said to the mouse, "Oh, dear, oh, dear, I was not responsible and have lost my eyes." Mr. Mouse said, "O.K. I will give you one of my eyes." Mr. Wolf put in his new mouse eye and it rolled around the bottom of his eyelid. He could only see small detail and single individuals with his mouse eye. He said, "Thank you, oh, thank you" and he gave the mouse ceremonial tobacco in gratitude. Mr. Wolf went on to meet a buffalo and he said, "Oh, Mr. Buffalo, I was given a mouse eye but I can only see individuals and I want to see more." Mr. Buffalo said, "O.K. I will give you one of my eyes." Mr. Wolf said, "Thank you, thank you." He put in his buffalo eye and it filled his whole eye. Oh, he could see all at once and see far, see the community and the family and the future. He then knew he was equipped to go to the Ottawa Conference on Family Violence with his gift to see small detail with his mouse eye and the bigger picture with his buffalo eye. To see the world with his new eyes, not only from a justice problem, not only from a safety issue but across turf issues.

I will speak of one Indian Reserve and community, who have used their mouse eyes to see the offender's and survivors' pain. Of how that grew to where they used their buffalo eyes to see how community education, Indian spiritual ceremony, breaking denial, treatment, working with their judge, Crown prosecutor, police, elders, peer counselling and therapists. And to know where they want to build a family healing centre for which they have raised $200,000 already.

They know that their accomplishments have taken time and patience.

Their accomplishments have taken effort from both their formal leadership and informal leadership.

Their accomplishments have been possible because they have a sober leadership and a high rate of sobriety developed over the years.

Their accomplishment has been possible through the inclusion of community Indian ceremony and spirituality in the development of their Community Family Violence Program.

This accomplishment has been possible because their denial of the spousal abuse, elderly abuse, child neglect, child sexual abuse has come off in layers, like an onion. The onion has been peeled with love and spirituality (not religiosity).

I will list in chronological order their movement in using their mouse and buffalo eyes: I will tell you of their inclusion in the circles of individuals, family, community, justice and the creator in their movement to health. These are not separate circles; they are spiral circles.

This community has 300 people with 200 young people and 100 adults.

- In the early 1970s, a child who was being neglected said, "I am going to live with grandma because I don't like to live with your alcoholism and neglect." Her family listened and sobered up.
- They developed a community intervention process to deal with alcoholism.
- They developed an intensive community focus on rejoining the spirit of the sense of community.
- They worked very hard to train through an experimental learning process about communication, personal growth, alcohol and drug addiction.
- The key was the involvement of the elected, sober leaders, informal leaders, some young, some old, who saw issues and were willing to bring those issues before their community. They used our values within the extended family system.
- One Elder said, "Our greatest strength in the Indian community is our extended family. That too," he said, "is our greatest weakness." When we look at family violence, too often we cover it up by saying, "Because we love them, we don't want to cause trouble." Yet, when we deal with family violence and support victims, the offenders and the extended family, to admit and treat violence has the potential of being and remaining our greatest strength.
- The same old man said, "Our values are reflected in our pattern of energy." This community said "our energy will reflect our value of the extended family."
- In 1985, with 95 per cent of the adult population sober, they received a report of a Band member charged with child abuse and employed in their school.
- They responded with a public statement, "We refuse to deny this issue," and brought in myself and an elder, a school educator, a psychologist and a community developer to set up a workshop on violence and to meet with the community. And they were in pain.

- The psychologist and I worked with the survivors of violence. They discussed how violence had spread. They talked of child physical and sexual abuse, spousal abuse, abuse by priests in residential schools, raping of elderly women, spiritual abuse by threats of bad medicine within families and the many faces of misuse of power and privilege within their community.
- Principally they focused on their simply hearing one another and supporting each other. They planned for the development of men's groups but only the women's group ran for the next three years.

That offender and his extended family went into treatment together and the whole community went to court to support the victim, non-offending parent, the offender and the extended family.

- They obtained resources via Medical Services Branch's non-insured benefits for Treaty Indians which pays for therapy.
- During this time they held sweat lodges for men only, women only and families. This was a spiritual process of healing and being with the earth, water and rocks in the community.
- They held weekly peer counselling sessions.
- In 1988, they experienced the suicide of a young man who was gay and they called me to do a workshop. I said, "No, you had best bring a therapist out to work with the families and friends of the deceased." They did. They refused to deny that there was a suicide and that their community was in crisis. They called a community meeting together to share their pain.
- They have youth groups who train their younger people to lead workshops for other young people.
- They incorporate their indigenous language into the school. They teach Indian singing, drumming, and how to make drums in their community wellness strategy. They hold round dances, sober dances and community meetings as they arise.
- Last year they were faced with four charges being laid against one of their most respected Elders, a teacher, and two others for incest and rape.
- They held a community meeting to decide their strategy to deal with their healing, the justice system and the community.
- The core of the planning was done by the survivors group who were a nucleus to the movement.
- They brought in a one-week co-dependency treatment program to ensure that they can deal with the charges and yet support the offenders' entry into treatment. They realized untreated co-dependency in extended family systems tends to impede healthy interventions.
- They set up a coordinating meeting with the Crown prosecutor, police, council, community and social services to ensure that those agencies did not once again violate the victim or family through blundering investigation.

- They had two therapists who work with individual families and with their peer support men's group and women's group this last year.
- They ensured the police would notify the key people in the community prior to interviewing a victim of family violence. After being notified the support team could go in to support the witness after the first interview with the police.
- They brought in a 10-day training program to inform their 40 community members. They sent out 10 other people to an outside training program. This training was not in therapeutic interventions but on attitudes and basic issues related to violence. This included some members of council.
- They requested the trial of the four men be held on the reserve. They wanted the Crown prosecutor and the judge to see the extended family system who were in therapy with the offenders before the court. They wanted the court to feel the community energy.
- They have charged the priest who abused one of the perpetrators who was originally before the courts in 1985. The priest was tried and convicted with an order to come to meet with the community to make amends after the completion of his treatment.
- Four other charges of child sexual abuse are pending against priests and brothers who have abused people in that community. They plan on meeting with church representatives to discuss the healing and pain of a broken trust.
- That community has a minimum of 10 more men being charged, two of whom volunteered to be charged because they wanted to be treated and to accept responsibility for their actions. How many non-native communities can say that?
- Their Chief and the rest of their council will be attending a 10-day training session on Child Sexual Abuse designed for executive directors, chiefs, councils and administrators dealing with community policy this September with which we are involved. Lorraine's suggestion of our elected leaders being trained is not so far-fetched as it seems because it's starting to happen in the Indian communities.
- After the members of the community were convicted in court on the reserve, the community held a round dance with drumming and a spiritual song to bring their families together. The judge, the Crown prosecutor, and the police witnessed a community committed to health. All of those families, some 45 in number have been in therapy for the past year.
- That community is committed to treatment and involvement and inclusion of their body, mind, spirit, the justice system, and the environment in the journey to health. They fast to ensure the direction they are following is one of the "Red Road."

Ladies and gentlemen, that community in their pain have used their mouse eyes and their buffalo eyes in looking at old problems in a new way.

That is our challenge and our gift to you today.

2.8.2 The Interagency Committee on Violence Against Women

Jennifer Mercer
Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women
Newfoundland and Labrador

I want to talk to you about the Interagency Committee on Violence Against Women which we developed in St. John's, Nfld., as a model for coordination of services to women who have been victims of violence.

I want to give you some background very quickly. In 1983 the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women for Newfoundland and Labrador hired me to research and write a booklet on violence against women. I spoke to many women who had survived violence in their lives. Before they actually went looking for help, most of them had assumed there was a helping network of agencies that provided services and that it was possible to plug into it at any point and get the support they needed. What they found instead was that agencies were territorial, competitive and highly critical of each other. One woman complained that she felt like a parcel being passed around from agency to agency by workers who complained to her that she shouldn't be there and that she had been referred inappropriately. As a result she felt more powerless and more victimized than before.

I spoke to care-givers who worked in the agencies that provided services to survivors of violence. They also expressed frustration at the system. Some were unclear as to the policy of their own agency towards victims of violence. Most were unclear as to the policy of other agencies. They couldn't reassure a survivor on how she would be treated in an agency to which they were referring her because they didn't know. Often their only source of information as to what happened in other agencies came from disgruntled clients who came back to them with complaints on how they had been treated.

Both victims and care-givers often voiced the wish that the agencies would co-ordinate their efforts to provide a more cooperative network of services to survivors of violence rather than working independently and in isolation. This would not only make the system seem less frightening to the survivors, but also would provide support for the care-givers.

I brought this information back to the Advisory Council and they decided to do something about it. The Council was the motivator that started the process.

The Advisory Council submitted a proposal to the Solicitor General for a project to establish a co-ordinating committee. The funding was approved but unfortunately not until four years later. By that time, many of the officials in the government departments and community agencies who had supported the project were no longer there, so we had to start all over from scratch.

The first big stumbling block we encountered was the amount of mistrust among agencies. Much of that mistrust was directed at the Provincial Advisory Council which was seen as a government body by feminist groups and as a feminist group by government bodies. People wanted to know what the Council really wanted. Would they select the committee? Would they chair the meetings and direct the agenda? What about confidential information discussed at meetings? Would the Council release it to the media or use it to criticize the government departments that employed many of the committee members? The Council considered these concerns and decided to step back and simply provide the tools to enable the committee to establish itself.

The mistrust of agencies extended beyond that directed at the Council. People were concerned about structure and who would have the power within the committee. We saw our role as facilitating the community to develop whatever kind of committee they felt would answer their needs.

One of the first things that we did was to invite people to a meeting to share information and approximately 40 agencies were represented. Many of these agencies didn't know of each other's existence, and other agencies were named who hadn't been contacted because we were unaware of their existence. This seemed to dispel any lingering doubts about the need for coordination.

The London Coordinating committee was very generous in sharing information with us. One suggestion they made was that we should look at establishing some balance between justice agencies and community groups.

By this time our list of agencies had grown to 104 and this included agencies whose primary focus was working with offenders. Acting on a suggestion made by workers at Iris Kirby House, the local shelter, we divided them into sub-committees based on their discipline or interest. We sent out a proposed profile of the committee and asked if anyone was uncomfortable either with the profile or on which subcommittee they had been placed. There are six sub-committees - Justice, Health, Social Policy, Direct Service Delivery, Education and Clergy. Each sub-committee selected two or three representatives to make up the Interagency Committee. The sub-committees continue to meet to work on issues that are relevant to their discipline.

The Interagency Committee on Violence Against Women had their first meeting in January 1988. At that meeting members were candid about their mistrust of each other. There were several stories that began with "I never refer to your agency because five years ago we referred a woman to you and something terrible happened...." At that meeting, members also wrote down and discussed their hopes for what the Committee could accomplish. Early meetings were spent learning about each other. For example, each of the sub-committees did a presentation on what was happening in their field. It took us awhile even to agree on a name but I think the Committee first felt a sense of cohesion after they drafted their philosophical and mission statements. They had felt their ideologies were far apart but they found that their similarities outweighed their differences and that they could work well together.

We had come together to develop a more coordinated and responsive support system for survivors of violence and much of the progress we made was at the sub-committee level. In Health, each of the hospitals in St. John's now has an internal committee to look at their effectiveness in dealing with the survivors of violence. They are looking at staff training needs, re-evaluating their policies and dusting off their protocols to see if they really answer the needs of the survivors. Along the way they have had to deal with disclosures from staff about the violence in their personal lives.

The Justice sub-committee organized a workshop for Legal Aid lawyers on the needs of a battered woman as a client and we have been asked to do a similar workshop for lawyers in private practice.

The Direct Service Delivery sub-committee has sensitized its members so that counsellors in private practice and those in agencies affiliated with churches are automatically bringing up the subject of violence in relationships with their clients. They are also including a discussion of violence in their marriage preparation classes.

The Education sub-committee at first was not sure that violence against women was an issue they should be involved in. However when the police commented that their intervention came to be of real help to family members because the pattern of abuse was established, and they asked that the issue be addressed in schools from the earliest grade on, the Education sub-committee took note. When the Interagency Committee was asked to do presentations on "Family Violence" in the schools, the questions the students asked made it obvious that what they were concerned with what violence is in their dating relationships. In fact nearly every presentation I have done in the schools has ended with a young woman following me to the door to ask for help in dealing with a violent boyfriend. When they heard this, the Education sub-committee took off. They have done a review of what is available in the schools on family violence and on self-esteem; both in terms of available resources and the time the teachers are actually spending on the issue. They are making recommendations to improve curriculum and teachers' training.

We had some real difficulty in developing the sub-committee for the clergy. One problem is that there doesn't appear to be very much interaction between clergy of different denominations. Another problem may be that they are feeling rather defensive right now. We considered a workshop for the clergy but after hearing of the experience of P.E.I., and after speaking with several members of the clergy in St. John's, we decided the time was not right. So we started small. We assembled the handful of clergy who had expressed an interest and met with them. They spoke to other clergy and the membership at the next meeting had doubled. We hope this is a trend. The clergy has asked for information and so each of their meetings is focused on meeting their expressed need for education. By the way, the kit produced by the Church Council on Justice and Corrections – "Family Violence in a Patriarchal Culture" – has been a valuable resource.

The Social Policy sub-committee along with the Direct Service Delivery sub-committee has been involved in public awareness.

Our progress has also been measured by the improvements in communication and understanding among agencies that has happened along the way. There was a lot of agency blaming by professionals but now members of the committee have come to understand some of the barriers professionals in other agencies face and to look at each other with new respect. An example of this is the way the police felt about feminists and especially shelter workers. I had an excellent opportunity to learn about this with my first involvement in a police training session. Normally, in my experience when you give a presentation, even if people don't agree with you, they won't be openly critical (or honest), but this presentation took place the day after a local T.V. show had aired a commentary documentary on a woman who had been battered for years and who had killed her husband. One of the shelter workers had been critical of the police on the T.V. show and the police was angry. As soon as I identified myself as a feminist, one officer said "Your crowd are telling women that it's okay to murder their husbands." I recognized this as an opportunity to learn from them so I discarded my index cards and listened. The police felt that feminists didn't understand the role of the police, were constantly criticizing them and were encouraging women not to trust or use the justice system. The police training officer and several workers from the shelter sat with me and we developed a workshop for the police, based on their comments. The shelter workers and the police looked at similarities in their work, especially common frustrations. We also looked at ways we could make each other's work easier. We made sure the police heard our praise of their efforts as well as our criticism. This built a new and better relationship between the police and the feminist community.

Even individuals have said they felt the Committee has improved their working relationship with other agencies because they now know a person within that agency they feel they can trust.

There are other networks in the St. John's area who are committed to coordination of services and they have made our job easier by promoting a climate where cooperation is natural. I am speaking especially of the Provincial Association Against Family Violence, the Interdepartmental Committee on Wife Battering and the Working Group on Child Sexual Abuse. We work well together and sometimes our boundaries become fuzzy and blurred but it doesn't bother us.

Another thing we have tried to do is to promote community commitment. As coordinator of the Interagency Committee, I have made 45 presentations on the issue of violence against women. Other members also make presentations. In fact we have been receiving so many requests that we are concerned that some of our resource people (notably the shelter workers) will be overtaxed so we are looking at more effective uses of their time, perhaps to train trainers in other agencies. Many members of our Committee are interested in becoming involved in public awareness but don't feel ready yet – either because they feel they don't know enough about the issue or because they don't feel comfortable doing presentations. We are planning a workshop for the fall and trying to develop an apprenticeship system.

We have developed a scenario that we distributed to agencies. The purpose of the scenario was to give our Committee some direction but it also gave agencies some insight into the needs and concerns of their staff. We had some really positive feedback – several agencies called us to tell us what a valuable exercise it proved to be for them and asked permission to circulate it further. We also had one agency, that we hadn't contacted, call and ask if they could use the scenario.

We have gathered and shared information among the 104 agencies that make up our committees and we have sent packages of information to community groups outside St. John's.

Perhaps I should talk about some of our ongoing struggles. One is the frustration of collective decision making. Some people on our Committee come from large bureaucratic organizations with a rigid hierarchical structure. Other people come from small collective groups. They have very different ways of working on an issue and in early meetings there was a great deal of conflict about how to hold the meetings, how to set objectives and accomplish them, how to develop consensus. As the members worked together, they developed new respect for each other's methods. That doesn't mean our differences disappeared but that we got comfortable enough with each other to challenge each other and to challenge our own stereotypes of each other.

The administration and coordination of six sub-committees and one Interagency Committee is a nightmare. There are at least seven meetings each month to arrange seven agendas, seven sets of minutes to be written up and mailed out and there are administrative tasks arising out of each set of minutes. The sub-committees are gradually taking over some of their own administration but it seems to be happening a little too gradually. Changing membership is a mixed blessing – it means new individuals get a chance to develop networks but it means we spend time in meetings, reviewing things so new members will be up to date.

Members of the Interagency Committee on Violence Against Women feel that the effort to coordinate services has improved their knowledge of resources and has given them a mutually supportive network of individuals with similar concerns. They enjoy the interaction. It has made their work easier. We hope it has improved and will continue to improve the lives of those who have survived or are surviving violence.

We are planning to take our model to rural areas in the province. Our ultimate goal is not to build a better system but to live in a society that is free of violence. Our criteria for choosing objectives is how far that task will bring us toward our goal.

2.9 Closing Plenary Address

Honourable Barbara McDougall, P.C., M.P.
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

I want to thank you all for participating in this three-day Forum on Family Violence. It is, with its good points and bad, as you have pointed out, I think a breakthrough on this issue that we've been able to bring together so many people who have crammed three days full of a very good agenda, if I may say so. I know your involvement in this issue is strong. The thoughts and opinions and experiences you have shared are going to be very valuable to us. That sharing of experiences and information has in the past been highly productive. Something that I place a very high value on is the process of consultation and pulling in people on whatever issues of the day we're dealing with, in order to help us achieve some solutions. And certainly in this area it's essential to further progress in eradicating wife, child and elder abuse in our country.

We have come to the point where in many circles, this kind of abuse has been exposed as social and health problems – the high costs of which cannot be tolerated in a compassionate society. I use the word "cost" in both senses. The most important cost, of course, is the personal and emotional cost to those people directly involved in what is a real personal tragedy. The root causes of violence are entrenched and the solutions complex. I've been following this issue with great personal interest over the past few years. Certainly the report put out by the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women in 1980 was, I think, the first occasion when many of us were quite stricken by what we had read and heard. The interrelations of so many forms of violence add to the difficulty in creating solutions and to the frustration of those personally involved and of those working in the field.

It has become increasingly clear that, just as no family or organization alone can grapple with the problem of family violence, no government can effectively deal with it, without the cooperation of other levels of government and other groups in society. The point about the need for corporate involvement is well made, I believe.

The federal government has undertaken a strong leadership role, in partnership with the Provinces, Territories, the voluntary sector, educators, professionals, researchers and other interested groups to help break the cycle of family violence. The active role of six Federal Government Departments is a very positive sign.

I know many of you wonder if we're really committed. Last June, when the Family Violence Initiatives were announced, this was not just a breakthrough in Canada, but also a big step forward internationally. As you've heard, to date some 350 projects, totaling $13.5 million, have been funded under federal child sexual abuse and family violence initiatives. Projects have involved public education and information sharing, and the prevention and treatment of offenders.

Much was said about Canada being a multicultural, multiracial country. We've tried to recognize that, because the activities established under these initiatives are being particularly oriented toward the special needs of Indian and Inuit women, immigrant and visible minority women, disabled women and rural and isolated women. Having said that, the point is well taken that there are very particular problems. I would not like to see us let up from what I see as a good start.

These groups are also being given special consideration under the funding initiative Project Haven. The program's goal is to develop 500 additional units of emergency shelter for the victims of family violence by 1992. The first two emergency shelter projects developed under Project Haven will be opened later this month. One is in Saskatchewan, the other in New Brunswick. A number of other projects are in the final stages of development.

These federal initiatives represent a significant response, I believe, to the various aspects of family violence. But the federal government is only one partner and that's why you're here today. The problem has a direct bearing on many areas of exclusion or concurrent provincial jurisdiction and as well, community groups, voluntary organizations, associations and agencies have long been the foundation of efforts to combat family violence in this country. For this reason, we have initiated a series of discussions with the Provinces and Territories and with the non-governmental sector. And we'd be happy to take a look at the structure of those discussions, towards the development of a long-term national approach to family violence.

We have made a good start since our announcement last June in addressing these issues, but clearly, more remains to be done. We have no intention of stopping here. This Forum was convened for exactly that reason so that you could discuss where we go from here and we could benefit from your advice. We don't do these things lightly.

Over the past three days at this conference, you've discussed and debated the issue of family violence in its many manifestations and from a number of perspectives. I gather from what I've heard that the speeches have been stimulating from some of the experts who shared their experiences and prompted lively discussions. I'm surprised to hear there was some feeling that people felt less able to come forward and speak than you would have liked. The intention was that the strong voices in this room would certainly be strong participants in the event itself. The quality of the research papers commissioned for the Forum, you've said, was good, and perhaps we can look at better ways to use them in the future.

In the presentations made at the plenaries and in your debates within the workshops, you have contributed to our increased understanding of the extent and nature of family violence: the pros and cons of approaching family violence in a general way – one which deals with elements common to all three forms of family violence – and in a more focused way – which concentrates on the specific problems of victim groups; the links between violence and the stresses experienced within families; the effects of the ethic of control and dominance; the effects of changes in the family structure and the roles of women and men; the communities which require special attention, such as some of the ones you've mentioned. I know that the representatives of aboriginal and immigrant families have underscored that issue – and their points are well taken.

Increased public awareness of family violence was identified as a key issue. The role of schools, service clubs, community groups and the media not only in fostering a wider public understanding of family violence, but also in helping individuals deal with it. In fact, I think the media has a particularly strong role, not just an educational and journalistic approach but also in their programming. I hope they would be very involved in discussions in the future. Also discussed was the need to improve training for those delivering services.

Suggestions for the prevention of family violence and the protection of the vulnerable covered a wide spectrum of approaches. Empowerment, and the importance of instilling and reinforcing the sense of individual self-worth among women and children, I think this is a role the media can play so that women and children don't think of themselves as vulnerable and victims. The collective responsibility for preventing family violence and protecting the vulnerable – a concept that embraces neighbourhoods, communities, society as a whole – was also confirmed.

I was with the Justice Minister just before I came and I mentioned I would be talking about the role of the justice system here. Topics discussed included various models of intervention and crisis resolution; the effectiveness of mandatory reporting; prosecution, involving a broad range of topics, including the adequacy of laws and statutes, police charging policies (I know there is a particularly sensitive case under consideration in Nova Scotia), sentencing practices, and significance of individual rights that we must keep re-emphasizing especially for those who feel vulnerable and victimized.

From your discussions, we have learned that we should look at all sectors in a multidisciplinary way, and that planning long-term solutions is complex and uncertain – that setting up transition homes alone is not enough; sponsoring research is not enough; training members of the criminal justice system is not enough.

We also learned that, while there are marked differences, the forms of family violence share many common characteristics: the victims are generally isolated and dependent, and are usually women and girls; there is a lack of coordination among different social services; and individual personal rights may at times be jeopardized, such as the right to privacy. In all cases, you've challenged society's general acceptance – even celebration – of violence.

We all discover as we delve deeper into this subject that there are no quick fixes. What has become very clear is the need for long-term approaches to the problem of family violence – to take all the efforts being made by both the public and private sectors – to share their experiences, problems, solutions and approaches – and to draw them together into a comprehensive national strategy to deal with family violence in Canada.

My colleague, Perrin Beatty, invited you to this forum for that purpose – to receive your advice for the development of a national strategy addressing family violence. Your recommendations and your contributions and your differences and where we agree over the past three days will be very much added to those resulting from the consultations undertaken over the past year with the provinces, territories and non-governmental groups, and with further consultations planned for this fall. I just want to repeat the answer to the question:

Is the government committed? YES! Over the coming months, options will be developed and reviewed, priorities will be established, groups views taken into account on both process and substance and strategies for their implementation developed. Our government's target date for completion of the national strategy is next spring.

At the federal level, the Child Sexual Abuse Initiative, the Victims of Crime Initiative, the Family Violence Prevention Program and the Family Violence Initiatives have achieved a significant, even unprecedented, degree of collaboration among Federal Departments.

I am equally encouraged by the growth of coordinating efforts at the provincial, non-governmental and community levels because up until recently, there has been little momentum and almost no coordination. We're now starting to get that and that's what we really need to do. We, all of us in this room and across Canada, have our work cut out for us. I hope you'll help us.

We must continue to find ways to help our networks function, to argue, to discuss, to agree, to disagree, to come up with solutions because all of us really care and we must continue to support you, the people who care.

We must continue to help families and individuals who are abused. But more importantly, – we have to promote permanent change in attitudes and values.

Men have to understand that it is not okay to beat their wives; children have to have the knowledge and confidence that they can explain when some forms of touching are not okay; and our elders must be accorded the dignity they deserve.

Then and only then will women, and children and older people have protection and have peace, and will the community they live in, reflect the values of peace and honour and dignity and individual right and security, that is a fundamental part, of what all of us believe, should be fundamental to this country.

SUMMARIES OF WORKING GROUP DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.0 SUMMARIES OF WORKING GROUP DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Methodology

This section of the Proceedings is a summary of the information from the 20 Forum working groups. At the Forum, the facilitator for each working group was asked to use the Terms of Reference provided to the participants in advance to guide and stimulate the discussions. The recorder for each working group was asked to submit notes at the end of each Theme workshop on a standard form, which included the following headings: points of discussion, special needs addressed, notable quotes, conclusions and recommendations.

For each of the five Themes, all of the notes from the 20 working groups were transcribed, footnoted as to source (approximately 2,500), and organized by subject headings. The overall structure of the Theme summaries reflects the content of the notes and not necessarily the Terms of Reference topics or order. The outcome of this first draft was a 250-page document. The next step was to identify, group and, in rare instances, summarize (training, role of schools, national prevention strategy) related recommendations and discussion points. Specific ideas that elaborated on a main idea or that presented different viewpoints were listed within each topic. In this way, every single idea from the workshops was reflected. It should be noted that the opinions, recommendations and quotations (often found at the beginning of individual topics) in these summaries are those of the participants at the Forum, and not necessarily those of the Government of Canada.

In most cases, the specific ideas are presented in the original wording from the working group notes. Duplication of identical ideas by different groups was handled by selecting the wording provided by one group. Notes that overlapped between Themes were pulled together under the most appropriate subject heading within one of the Themes. Cross referencing is noted where notes and recommendations have been moved to another theme for the purpose of continuity. To improve readability of some notes, very light editing was done. Group requests to change or omit certain entries have been respected. No attempt was made to assign priorities to the information but, in some cases where a recommendation or idea was proposed by a majority of groups, this has been indicated. While consideration was given to identifying the number of groups which supported each recommendation, it was felt that a recommendation supported by only one group makes it no less important than one supported by several.

Our profuse apologies for the loss of one theme's notes for Group 20 was graciously accepted by the facilitator.

Concern was expressed by some participants that the needs and experiences of certain groups be focused on (women and general concepts are the main focus). To that end, notes and recommendations pertaining to aboriginal peoples, children, disabled persons, the elderly, ethnocultural, and rural/remote communities, are found for the most part, in the concluding section of each Theme: Special Needs Groups. Please note however, that there is considerable content relating to these groups found in the main body of text (Plenaries, Themes, Participants' Perspectives).

The rationale for processing the working group notes was to achieve the best possible balance between accurately capturing the participants' ideas and producing a readable and usable document.

THEME 1

Extent and Nature

3.1 THEME 1: EXTENT AND NATURE OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

We are all potential perpetrators.[1]

The dictionary defines "philosophy" as a "system of principles for the conduct of life." To define a philosophy for preventing family violence, we must first understand how pervasive it is, who does it, who is affected, what causes it, how it is perpetuated and what knowledge is needed. The group notes for Theme I: Extent and Nature reflect the development of such a philosophy.

Acknowledging that women, children and the elderly are the primary victims of family violence, discussion notes and recommendations for this theme reflect the participants' overall conviction that violence is nonetheless systemic to our society, within and outside of the family.

Section One of this theme focuses on the systemic nature of violence, the question of where, how, and on whom the focus should be placed, messages and recommendations.

The discussion and recommendations in Section Two are concerned with the causes of family violence, associated factors, the family in the context of violence and definitions.

Section Three identifies concerns and recommendations pertaining to research in the area of family violence.

Section Four relates the perspectives and recommendations of special needs groups, including aboriginal peoples, disabled persons, the elderly, ethnocultural groups and rural and remote communities. Material relating to women and children may be found throughout Theme I.

SECTION ONE

The groups agreed that while women, children and the elderly are the primary victims of violence, there is potential for violence in all of us. Violence is embedded within our Canadian society. The messages, the debate over how we should focus our attention and the endemic nature of vulnerability are all indicators of this systemic problem.

Discussion Notes

Messages

We must focus on ending violence whether it is within the family or not.

Family violence (all forms) is life threatening to all members.

Family violence is not an isolated, private matter.

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[1] The participants provided many eloquent and poignant quotations in the "raw" notes. The editors have included some of these as introductions to specific topics that follow the quotes.

Violence is unacceptable to anyone.

Does not matter which culture we come from: violence is violence. We should focus on those who have been abused, frequency and what we are doing for that group.

We treat symptoms and not the cause in too many of our programs.

As to the extent, we must look at our own selves. We must admit that the extent of mankind's power is determined by our society. The extent follows our vision of the problem.

It is our conclusion that we do not perceive the different areas that exist within the problem. There are battered children: we solve this particular problem. We do not ask or try to discover if there exists any other violence within the family.

We are building institutions instead of putting money into professions.

Acknowledgment of the part played by grass-roots movement in influencing policy - validation and encouragement of their role.

Transition houses have been excluded and aren't being consulted.

Social policies do not reflect today's realities.

Can we promote funding that is integrated?

"In developing a national policy, we can't allow directives from a top-down structure because it denies those directly involved an opportunity to make their own choices."

Concern about confidentiality in systems working together:

- violence
- language barriers
- the non-openness of resources; concern at the level of popularization.

Assault is assault: a crime wherever it takes place. Need to sensitize men to the subtlety of their (power/control) behaviour.

The Question of Systemic Violence

Should we restrict the discussion to the family on ideological grounds or should we base it on violence against women and children?

Is violence systemic to society? Consensus that violence a major problem; funding bodies require statistics re: extent of problem. Waste time producing statistics - acknowledge problem by attendance at conference.

In this society, it is not deviant for men to use violence - there is a structural and political context for violence.

There was agreement that the overall or long-term goal could be to eventually change societal values and beliefs about family violence but that we could concentrate on all the areas simultaneously in dealing with the problem.

Violence is systemic to our society "designer violence"; e.g., Miami Vice.

Is violence systemic to our society? Yes, violence is systemic to our society; family operates within the society and its faults and virtues are intensified within the family.

Social condoning of violence.

"Proclivity of human beings to hurt each other cannot be completely corrected."

Feminist philosophy is to stop violence in family and as part of broad structural change, promote self-esteem for all individuals; treating all people equally leads to eradicating family violence.

Acceptability is a question; must be willing to challenge systemic views.

Violence is systemic to our society and response must address this and the attitudes that permit violence.

"Violence is systemic to our society": we accept it and we pick and choose where we accept it. "Our society today is an abusive society."

Does term "family violence" mask societal violence?

We have turned away from caring, giving kind of society.

Broader than a family issue.

Family violence is on a continuum.

Society uses violence as a way of solving social problems.

The Focus

Do the interventions indicate that we should be studying this problem under the banner of violence against women?

Ideological - we cannot focus solely on the family or family unit. Should address the broader issue of violence against women, children and the elderly.

Divergent view here about not taking on too much and therefore not achieving results in this area.

There was some concern about "lumping together" all the different types of abuse (elder, child, wife) under umbrella of family violence. What do each of these groups tend to lose as a result? What do they gain?

The problem of sexual abuse, physical abuse of women and children goes beyond family violence.

"All three issues affect individual groups in our society; no such thing as a "healthy" incestuous family. If you look at family violence within the larger society the solutions are different; one family can affect the whole community."

Family violence could get lost as a specific problem if too much is included; i.e., child sexual abuse.

Better to discuss violence in specific context – even the depiction of the logo is very "traditional" family; also depicts the cause as coming from outside the family.

Are women equal if they admit they are abusers?

In a society that condones violence, why is it that not all men are violent?

Chain of command – boss yells, husband hits, wife hits kids, kids kick dog.

Concern over generalizing – women do abuse, elders abuse, etc.

Four to five per cent of women commit acts of violence. It still remains to be determined whether they are acting in self-defence.

Extent of violence – dating relationships and adolescents.

Review of spousal assault (n=3000) 5% counter-charges noted in Solicitor General study on the subject; another study in child discipline on 3000 people was quite successful.

Don't know what prevalence is because haven't asked the "right" questions – definitional problem; either too broad or narrow for agencies to respond to.

Question whether there is an increase in violence – possibly a change in the amount of disclosure by victims.

Do we have a clear picture of the extent of the problem? Yes, we have enough information.

Elderly abuse becomes women abuse again.

Neglect of children – going without food, clothing, love, caring, attention.

Often kids are abused and then not listened to.

Violence among girls – seems to be starting – concern.

The future may reveal to us that there exists a fourth kind of violence: that against men.

No one has claimed that women are 100% victims and that men are 100 % violent.

It is a myth that women commit psychological acts of violence.

Men are the originators of violence.

In the realm of psychological violence, there may be as many women as men.

Violence is not essentially feminine.

Perpetrators are the problem, not the victims.

Devaluation and dehumanization of victim by offenders.

Often wife assault starts before a couple are married or live together.

Women are most at risk after they have left the home; once the available resources have been used, where do you go then?

Who victimizes children? What can be done to identify these problem areas before its too late?

Misuse of info re: intergenerational link of violence.

During the Forum, we must not devote all our attention to violence against women.

Who is Vulnerable?

Some groups initiated discussion on this topic (as part of Theme III but included here for continuity) by considering the appropriateness of the term "vulnerable." Several groups indicated that the term is patronizing, suggests weakness and helplessness, is definitely not empowering and takes the focus away from the perpetrator. Furthermore, it was pointed out that we are all vulnerable at different times of our lives due to age, control of spouse, mental incapacity, geographic isolation and a variety of other factors. Nonetheless, a number of groups were identified as being at risk and in need of empowerment.

Children

Children are confused and abused; they cannot be divided into groups because of varying developmental levels. Young children are often more upset by reactions of others. Older child can be extremely upset over a "touch."

Children of abusers are vulnerable. In court, mother often left alone; child not believed. Young children who disclose want abuse to stop (evidence behind television tape). Social worker's job is to protect the child. Court can appoint a lawyer for child. Child is still the sufferer – guardian or parent does not know how the system works.

Concern with children who see battering as norm (75% of women batterers have had that experience).

Survivors of violence and victims of abuse are vulnerable.

Women

This is a real concern - women learning these models of empowerment; e.g., a study of 1800 battered women showed 70% were survivors of child sexual abuse. This is a high correlation, not a cause. These experiences developed coping mechanisms such as disassociation, fuzzy personal boundaries and difficulties in relationships.

Breadth of violence against women: men rape and assault their own clan, then those who have less power.

"Human violence is not restricted to either sex." "Women are the principal victims."

Women are victims but can be just as violent. One participant refuses to leave this fact out.

We agree that women are predominantly the victims, men are predominantly the abusers.

Until 1964, women and children were on the list of persons not having any legal capacity. Family violence is: men who beat their wives.

Group debates at length whether or not women are the majority of victims.

While there are many cases of women as perpetrator, the majority of victims are women and elderly women.

Family violence = 90% men against women – men are most often the perpetrators of violence; male/female, adult/child domination.

"We're talking about the abuse of women from the cradle to the grave."

We are all vulnerable at different times of our lives depending on stressors, situations, etc. However, women are mostly vulnerable. Lower socio-economic groups often identify themselves in their requests. Higher socio-economic groups appear more reticent. Men and women are both at risk for assault; however [this is] not [the case] in the family.

We must advocate on behalf of the disadvantaged – women of whatever class are relatively disadvantaged, just a difference of degree.

The Elderly

Need to make seniors aware of their rights – promote seniors as people who can make decisions but give them ways to cope with life and stress.

The frail elderly are especially vulnerable.

Disabled persons

The handicapped are especially vulnerable – situations are very draining on their caregivers too.

The Isolated

Geographically isolated populations are vulnerable.

Caregivers

Are caregivers battered social workers? Do their own attitudes prevent them from accessing needed services for themselves?

Caregivers of the most vulnerable often are powerless themselves and need care.

Vulnerable population may attract "sick" (although well-intentioned) helpers – they need to be screened more carefully. Also important to look at helping positions in family violence field. How much value do we place on them: if staff are poorly paid, poorly trained, unsupervised, do not receive support, etc.?

Socio-Economic Groups

The middle class are particularly vulnerable because they do not qualify for welfare programs and cannot afford assistance.

All socio-economic groups are equally vulnerable because they do not qualify for welfare programs and cannot afford assistance.

All socio-economic groups are equally vulnerable to family violence.

Problematic that socio-economic problems need to be addressed – doubly disadvantaged are more and more subject to abuse. "Whatever happens to you, it's worse if you're poor."

Aboriginal Peoples

Native women are vulnerable.

Institutionalized aboriginal children are vulnerable.

Street Kids

Holistic approach is needed for street kids; they can't solve problems when uneducated, unemployed, no prospects. Need to empower people to seek new strategies.

Jail Inmates

Brutalized by guards – they emerge more violent from prison. Abuse of power by staff in institutions needs more monitoring.

Recommendations

Need:

- the government to be more distant;
- more cooperation between sectors and more sharing;
- to address broader issues but not lose touch with specific issues;
- policy that does not ghettoize different age groups;
- all facets to work together so pieces of learning do not become misused; privacy of family needs to change to break secrecy;
- a multi-disciplinary approach to stop working in isolation;
- leadership to continue efforts;
- to look at the past to see what has happened and remember how people were brought aboard on issues in the past;
- government to stop fragmenting the response: government creates fragmentation by specializing and funding thereby forcing us to scramble for funds which makes us look like we're competing.

Avoid:

- being seduced into stereotyping, labeling or narrowing vision;
- confusing violence in the home with violence occurring in an institution;
- postponing decision-making and action. We should look for and act on consensus as soon as possible; immediate action is preferable to 10 more years of conferences.

Note:

- violence is sometimes committed by omission;
- that if we solve the problem of violence against women, we solve the problem of violence against others (minorities, etc.);
- that as professionals, we are sometimes the cause of the problem; it is necessary to learn how to work together – persons getting involved must be more often para-professionals; consultation with transition movement is essential – women in transition movement are professionals and must be recognized.

SECTION TWO

Abuse of power and control is the root cause of all violence.

Discussion and recommendations pertaining to the causes of family violence focused on root causes, the role of socialization, associated factors, families in the context of violence and definitions. Overwhelmingly, the predominant cause as expressed by the Forum participants is the unequal distribution of power and control in our patriarchal society that places women, children and the elderly in positions of dependency and powerlessness.

Discussion Notes

Power and Control as Root Causes

If we feel comfortable with our own power, we won't need to limit another's power:

- poverty as a means to control;
- powerlessness of individual in society;
- societal – cultural values of family power relationships.

Elderly, wife and child abuse have a common thread in that such groups have a shared position in society where power and trust is abused.

Family violence occurs because of a difference in male and female power. Is there an increase in family violence or has it always been present? It is no longer a legitimate behaviour and we have a long way to go to change that attitude.

There is a risk of abuse when there is a power imbalance.

Social attitudes and structures play an important role – themes of power and control.

It is gender specific with roots in our patriarchal society.

Societal and familial power and control problems, fundamental values in a patriarchal society.

We can use word "causes;" use of word is strong but power control, etc. are indicators of precursors to violence.

It is necessary to realize that the problem is the distribution of power within the family. (It is not really shared).

Notion of headship and authority perhaps attributable to religious teachings, politics and economics.

Religious institutions have fed into patriarchal, hierarchal structure.

Limiting the discussion to violence within families eliminates some of the causes which are due to the context of the societal values in which the family exists.

Some concern that root cause may not address child abuse: children possibly more vulnerable.

"We live in a violent society created by men; it's designed to keep women and children as second-class citizens and society does this through economic, social and political structures."

"It's men trying to control women's behaviour."

Power imbalance brought out by feminists; important to note how this dynamic works in abuse contexts.

Factors involved in family violence: oppression of women, children, and elders, the latter being primarily women. In this sense, it can be said that family violence is caused mostly by men and that women are generally the victims. The problem of stress and socio-economic factors is noted. The group questions the cause of such violence and the various, possibly interrelated, factors involved.

Return to the concepts of power: Violent men enjoy many privileges; men have been taught these notions for a long time.

The setting up of maternity leave constitutes a valid policy.

Women are abusers of kids and boys are abused – links with patriarchy and hierarchy (organization of power). Increase of women beating up women; in emergency, seen in hospitals. Is this now socially acceptable?

Power relationships (abuse of power and control over individuals).

Elements of anger, control and fear which become abusive; passive/active family violence; unequal distribution of power and wealth.

Violence systemic – attitudinal – permeates society; i.e., in media.

Issue of power and control – gender issue – men cannot control wives.

Patriarchy is the root cause of family violence and is defined as a hierarchal (i.e., bureaucratic) organization of power, as opposed to the feminist organization of power, which is a flat, collective organizational form, based on cooperation and consensus. The patriarchal, hierarchical organization of power depends on people at the top exercising power over others at the bottom, whereas the feminist organization of power, in a collective format, focuses on each member of the group actualizing their own power, or autonomy, as opposed to power over someone else. Hierarchical, patriarchal organization is focused on efficiency, competition and production. The focus of collective, feminist organization is on the quality of interaction, power sharing and the process. Looking at patriarchy and organizational forms in this way enables the analysis to be applied to a broad range of social and family problems, including violence, to encompass women as offenders, and boys as victims. This analysis of the organization and exercise of power in our society and in our families has a great deal of explanatory power in our consideration of family violence, as well as pointing us in the direction of some avenues for change, including both long-term social change and short and medium-term prevention strategies (e.g., education, prevention programs, media images, etc.).

Maybe it's not how we get power but how we use power that is the issue.

Prevention: in the summary, everything is placed at the same level – beams – the basic causes, stress and sexism, are not at the same level. Speaking of sexism – for women; violence is the symptom. The clearest example: walking alone at night.

Resolution: The basic cause of family violence is the patriarchal society as well the underlying sexism in the relationships between men and women. Other factors worsen the situation (socio-economic, stress, racism, discrimination against elders); discussion: reverse order – sexism and patriarchy; prefer to speak about society: values: money and power to the detriment of other values such as cooperation, equality; patriarchy, and sexism. Proposal – close discussion and vote on the proposition.

We are dealing with power. The belief system is based on inequality which is serving the purposes of the male-dominated society.

Aiming at sexism is a good way of organizing but we are culture specific – white, occidental culture not the monopoly on patriarchy.

I do not agree that it is patriarchy, sexism. Lots of historical forms of patriarchy.

Basic cause – patriarchal society. Along with the sexism that generally characterizes the relationship between men and women, I fear it pervades our structures, laws, institutions, which need to include prevention.

Society – inequality between the sexes. "Society is too patriarchal."

Socialization

Interest in "restorative justice vs. punitive justice."

Legal system to penalize offenders but maybe sentences reflect society's wishes; very punitive society increases jail population.

Stonewalling, public reaction to ads, for example, by irate male members; even response can be violent. It is institutionalized.

Violence is condoned and endorsed - even if family is peaceful; there is a constant invasion of violence into homes.

So many things have developed quickly; old traditions have broken down too fast. We are fighting a public battle of approval of abuse and sometimes self-reporting results in estrangement from the community.

Family violence involves "relationships and how people interrelate" (attitudes).

One distinction between violence against adults and violence against children is that while we have clear child welfare laws to protect children, society believes that "adults" are able to make decisions as to potential actions. Therefore, legislation for adults "has no teeth"; children are a resource and elders are a burden.

Family violence can begin at an early age (few months to aged and infirm). It is a prominent issue in society with many contributing factors crossing all ages.

Condoning of violence – power to serve own self-esteem.

Vested interests in violence.

Different from other crimes – effects on members of family; use of violence as problem-solving mechanism common in society; acceptance and encouragement of violence (TV, movies, sports).

Concern over systemic dysfunction.

A criminal or social problem at first, it can sometimes have consequences on mental and psycho-emotive health.

Has family violence changed over time? Probably as did society.

No one sees there is a problem, which leads to denial.

Very divergent attitudes – boys are highly competitive and inherit an aggressiveness that is in part cultural and in part genetic.

Attitudes in schools.

Seductress-type behaviour among very young girls is not genetically caused. Socialization – parents feel powerless. School addresses "racism," but not "sexism," television's influence (video games), peer pressure. Different social behaviour, as early as two years old; change this: make more room for men at preschool and primary school levels (presence of men expose boys to less compartmentalized behaviour male models).

Problem with research which says abuse is cyclical is that there is peer pressure amongst males to be violent to be masculine and gain control.

Males are brought up with a "Rambo hero" as a role model; then, when they grow up and assault wife, they are dysfunctional.

Repression about sexuality, talking about it; if you don't find your perfect mate, you, as a woman, are responsible.

Must consider the role and status of women and children in society.

Attitudes towards sexuality and violence – when a marriage relationship breaks down, is when family violence enters the home.

Precursor to violence is attitudes.

A great deal of violence is taught.

Marriage as an institution that perpetuates violence and incorporates forms of violence. Roles learned by people; roles have been set for us.

What happens if the community impacts the family.

Bureaucratization/salvaging – government salvages expertise from community groups.

Trouble with "good people" and "bad people" e.g., cartoons, Vietnam, it's o.k. to shoot bad people; hockey; Rambo.

Associated Factors

Chemical abuse

Pressure times (watch these times and try to prevent the problem). In field of policing, alcohol and drug offenders use this as an excuse. Build-up to Christmas: family violence can increase 50%. Cabin fever also a high risk. Full moon also a phenomenon. All these things happen to increase family violence.

External variables (alcoholism, learned behaviour) are juxtaposed.

A history of family violence ties all abuse together, as does alcoholism and drug abuse.

Alcohol, drugs, etc., can be an excuse but need to recognize these as illnesses as well, in their own right.

Link with alcohol abuse and battering of women. Alberta statistics is that in one-half of violent incidents, alcohol is involved.

We don't know of any alcohol/drug abuse program which addresses battering of women; it should be involved because of the connection between chemical dependency and violence. It will provide a forum to get the message across.

Addiction is a spectrum of disease [which] affects every area of people's lives.

Psychopaths, alcoholics, drug addicts feel empowered to family violence and are at high risk of being either abused or abusers; psychological abuse is harder to control.

"Sexual offenders: there is a spectrum to repeat violent behaviour and at the other end it is the child that is killed – this view of that kind of person may have great potential for change" (hormones, castration). Highly disturbed can be triggered very easily; 80% of drug addicts involved in family violence. Hard core television media should cover the problem more quickly.

Pornography

Pornography, poverty, etc., are missing [from precursors to family violence] as are church and state complicity competition.

Interrelated conditions that encourage violence: power distribution within the family, within society. For example, pornography is one factor which reinforces the stereotype that encourages violence against children.

Poverty

Cause – family violence – takes root in the patriarchal system; other causes: stress, socio-economic factors are aggravating the problem.

Questions were raised as to the connection of poverty and other characteristics commonly associated with family violence.

"Poverty and violence links are substantial." Women in poverty have next to no chance of getting out of the cycle because of government cut-backs. All agreed the link exists. Include state complicity.

Extends to persons in positions of authority; i.e., priest, teachers, social workers.

Competitiveness

We don't respect each other and need to get up the ladder no matter how.

Social policy: "get a job"; high school kids all have jobs, school work suffers; focus on materialism, fast pace, competitiveness.

We are judged by the products we use; eg., marketing, denture cream.

Learned behaviour (violence means success).

Individual

Climate of intolerance – definition of family, poor, homosexuals, natives.

Pitting of generations against generations – conflict predisposition.

Anger, alcohol, stress, may cause problems at home but subject does not display same traits at work or other areas; may not be the cause at all.

People wouldn't be violent if the predispostion wasn't already there; anger is channeled to the family.

Individual – learned behaviour, condone violence in media, sexual stereotypes, lack of value for human life.

Do women cause violence? Culturally, a man interprets a woman's communication problem as nagging. However, when a man requests communication, there is obviously a problem. An individual is responsible for own assaultive and abusive behaviour. Perpetrators need help prior to family or marital therapy.

Is violence a learned behavior? Therefore, it is possible to change it.

Changing Sex-role Expectations

In this time of change and evolution, it is very difficult to adjust to change; there are forces pulling us in different directions. We don't understand the expectations and it is therefore difficult to cope.

The innate aggressivity of human beings; frustration spills out into family life.

Although women can now assert themselves economically, they still don't feel empowered at home. The ambiguity of emerging female/male roles adds to confusion regarding "family behaviour." Despite this confusion, abuse still exists within the system regardless of societal structure.

Other

Psychiatry and social services may be adding to the problem, although some progress has been made through addiction.

Violence is a vicious circle within the family, within the couple.

Usually, it is emotional dependence that retains a relationship (i.e., lack of self-esteem and weaknesses within the individual).

Correlation between vulnerability and violence.

Correlation of violence to other social problems.

Often sexual and physical abuse of children along with wife battering.

Mothers are coming under suspicion for sexually abusing their children within the context of socially acceptable actions (such as changing diapers). Mothers are often isolated and thus suspected of having practically amorous relationships with their children. This is very violent against women!

The victim and abuser have a highly charged emotional relationship.

Same people at different stages of life are victimized.

Problem may be intergenerational.

Crowding and isolation all contribute to family violence. Media output vastly increased leading to sensory overload. Media is male-dominated on the whole. Role of media – reflects what society will accept, reflects what society expects and does not reflect reality.

Regressive fundamentalism by elected officials.

Cause is seen as victimization; one cause is way we view women in abusive situations.

A lot of different levels to causes: often involves violence against selves, then acts of violence against women later.

Perpetuation of family violence is sometimes due to people needing [getting] "fines" [soft and] not "punitive" [hard] measures.

Families

The family survived for a long time because is was not questioned. Now, with a realignment of power relationships, people don't know how to relate. Men now have to relinquish some power and the rules are changing. There are no checks and balances any more and the family unit has lost it's "generational" or "family" grouping.

Discussion and recommendations pertaining to the topic of families focused primarily on the need to redefine the reality of family structures to reflect the experience of victims and the context of violence. The family can no longer be viewed necessarily as a haven composed of caring individuals. Nor should we impose artificial "nuclear" structures upon its composition. Families are what they are and policies, approaches and programs should reflect the self-defined continuum of realities with the ultimate goal to enable individuals to live free from violence. Definitions of family and forms of violence should reflect victims' experiences and not lose sight of the fact that while "we are all potential perpetrators," certain groups are targeted for violence.

Discussion Notes

What is the difference between "non-violent" and "violent" families? Violent families are inarticulate, lack communication skills – not comfortable with communication route.

"Shouldn't ever support the family at the expense of the individual."

We must check what are people's real needs. Parents do not easily accept interference by the State in their family's affairs.

Traditionally, the route of least risk is the family; selection of a victim is a conscious choice.

If the family disintegrates, both spouses "fail." Are we trying to salvage a relationship based on "personalizing failure"?

Do we want to define the family? Not realistic in view of federal department's attempts at definition or Quebec regional workshops on this subject (mostly link to child/adult relationships). What is important is to recognize that there are different models/types of families (adults only, common-law relationships, monoparentals, homosexuals, etc.). It is how we adjust for each different model in order to come to the aid of victims as well as aggressors. It is not a question of returning to the traditional family (e.g., speech on abortion), basically ideas have not changed: husband-wife-children context no longer functions well in many cases where the wife works. Abuse as an issue of power tends to disappear if we keep reflecting on dysfunctional family. Are we dealing only with violence or violence to individuals? The word "family" is too limited (e.g., hospital employees not having a family relationship). Often, the relationship is that of an acquaintance rather than a family tie.

Reality that family is changing; many definitions too restrictive – discussion around what group constitutes a family.

Definition of "family" has not been developed. Therefore have been a change in the dynamics over time.

Struggle about what we mean by "family" in family violence.

Changes in family; increased awareness of violence and increased societal stressors.

It's not the family but its organization that is bad; there are strengths within the family that we can learn a lot from.

Agreement – "dysfunctional family" not an appropriate term. We don't know what norm is; don't know what family is. Difficult to get a definition that is acceptable to everyone. Family is group of people who gather for nurturing and support. Concern is labeling and blaming family for not conforming to stereotype.

Definition of family: most participants accept this as: "a gathering or community of individuals tied together by trust, kinship or affection." We should avoid assumptions about the family which relate to the stereotype popular in the 1950s.

Defining Family Violence

"Violence within the family" is preferred to "family violence."

"Violence against women and children" is suggested as a preferred alternative to "family violence", though some participants see the issue as one of anti-violence in society in general.

The definition of "wife abuse" is limited too often to "wives" and promotes a rigid context.

Definition of family violence is so broad as to include too much.

Definitional problem: "family violence" brings to mind intra-familial problem and extra-familial leading to confusion. Teachers and caregivers have a problem in response; these two differ in abuse especially as it pertains to protection of children.

Any definition of violence must reflect the victims' experience. This is particularly relevant to the child being believed. Otherwise we continue to further and doubly victimize this victim by judging her behaviour (e.g., hysteria) upon being first confronted by the police.

"Family violence" is gender-neutral and takes away from the fact that women are the majority of victims.

"Family violence" as a name for this national conference restricts the focus by directing thoughts to traditional family.

Use of the term "family violence" maybe helpful in some ways but it denies violence that happens in institutions and dating relationships.

"Family violence" is non-gender-specific; i.e. women's issue. Important not to disguise this under the broader terms. People do not identify that it's them; missing the fact that people are targeted for violence.

Recommendations

Causes

Base: Intervention on caring.

Teach:

- The children how to cope with stresses; we have a choice when we handle stress.
- Children about sexism and its consequences in addition to racism. Start this at the age of two, when sex-role stereotyping begins.

Change: Social attitudes and values that are conducive to violence and abuse.

It Is:

- Extremely critical to define causes in order to develop our directions for the future.

Need:

- To address community tolerance of family violence from a community perspective.
- Solutions that are flexible; must take into account community needs and contexts. It's not a homogeneous problem so it doesn't deserve a homogeneous solution.

Develop: A strategy that is directed at both:

- The root causes, deeply entrenched in equality of women in society, the acceptable use of power and force.
- Members of the family to provide the resources that they need.

Do not: Associate economic disadvantage with a propensity to be a victim or offender.

Challenge: Societal values and acceptance of the more subtle forms of family violence; governments too, about power and domination.

Empower: Women, disabled, elderly.

Respect: Differences.

Need:

- A feminist analysis – women have voice, women's issues.
- To look at brutality beyond family; e.g., young offenders.
- New culturalization – new way of looking at each other.
- To desexualize power – economic, political, etc.
- Victims must become verbal, explain the causes, express their needs.
- To address the key issues of sexism, poverty, ageism and racism first.
- To think more about "nurturing" and controlling, to think differently about gender roles.
- Uninvolved males to be a target to work on.
- To recognize commonalties and differences in types of abuse.
- To recognize that poverty issues underlie all problems and that there is not enough prevention.
- To look at factors that lead to fact of child victims becoming adult victims and not assume that there is a cause and effect relationship.

Adopt: A holistic perspective which examines the permutations and combinations.

Note:

- That abuse in "upper class" is denied by victims; victims not believed. Feelings of betrayal very prominent and police are reluctant to prosecute and destroy these families.
- That the way family violence is presented creates public acceptance problems. Research should be careful in the presentation.
- That we must not use the "cure"-equates-with-"results" mentality; we need a process, not a quick fix. We must recognize that this will be long process.
- That we must condemn all violence as part of approach to family violence.

Reexamine: Values in light of current stress on economics and materialism.

Resolved: That the primary causes of family violence are our patriarchal society and the underlying sexism in relationships between men and women. Other factors aggravate the situation (socio-economic, stress, racism, ageism).

Families

Need:

- To note the tendency to stress the promotion of the family and to downplay the reality of this violence must be resisted.
- Community protocols to include family follow-up, treatment, legal protection.
- To heighten the awareness of psychologists and social workers concerning the true plight of women who are the head of the household: poverty, solitude, etc., so that their feelings of guilt are minimized.
- To re-think the family as a unit made up of individuals with individual rights who work together. If the pressure of living up to societal ideals is present for men and women, are they then manifested in the same way? Are they related to learned behaviour?
- To separate the offender and treatment of the offender from viewing the family as "dysfunctional." There is a hazard in using the large term of "family violence."
- To educate the family of victims as well so that they support women's safety: not family together at "all costs."
- A broader definition of "family" as narrow, past definitions have hindered development of relevant policies – even to extent of banking policies.
- The family to be a safe place for the individuals.
- To know that the nuclear family is no longer the only model – many others; need to redefine.
- To define dysfunctional family.
- The Federal Government to stop transfer payments if [broader] definition of family not accepted.
- To look at resource allocation and funding of programs for "families" and how traditional view of what constitutes a family has changed.
- To address issues of policy of extended family with a view to encourage nurturing, care and concern.
- To look to notions that keep families together.
- To endorse keeping families together only in context that this is one possible alternative for a family.

Permit: Victims to define own family – subjective definitions.

We: Are talking about groupings of trust, affection, kinship, present definition excludes foster families, homosexual families; just separating and calling them dysfunctional and not working with family as unit does not meet needs of children.

If: You look at the family in isolation it puts the onus on the family to change.

Look:

- More at balance of power not necessarily who is a family; conceptualization of family – difficult; too broad-lose idea of dependent relationship of family; Britain uses term "domestic violence" between intimates with an imbalance of power.
- At the rights of individuals versus keeping family together. Difficult to resolve but important to focus on issue. National forum on issue should be considered.

Define:
- The family differently – friends – victim often alone.
- Family: people living together by common arrangement in one house/place: traditional model doesn't hold.

Examine: The impact on the family of a sex abuse brother or sister by an outside relative. Non-offenders (parent) need advice to help the affected child.

Address: The nature of changing families through education.

Move: The definition of family away from units to relationships.

We Need: To take games into account and to consider all the possible victims within a family.

Do: Not ignore extent of family and these networks to make up a response.

When: Benefits are determined as a social unit then you cut people out. We need to look at individuals and their relationships to make it work; "family" has different definitions, which all need to be recognized.

Note: That families are arbitrarily divided because of philosophical base: although there are families who should not be together, there should be a push to keep the families; more sympathy and compassion for battered moms than abusive fathers. Recognition that there are clear cases and stages where the family must not be together; about erosion of criteria in deciding what families stay together or apart; for women that although laudable goal to keep family together, must not be "at all costs"; can be used to minimize need for alternative services.

Definitions

Use:
- A descriptive definition of "abuse" to include as much as possible in order to be more informative and avoid breaking it up into small categories.
- Definitions of abuse that reflect the victim's experience.
- A definition of "family violence" that is not too narrow.

Define:
- A common language regarding family violence.
- "Family violence" to include the psychological, legal and social aspects to facilitate understanding and treatment of offenders.
- "Stress" clearly.

Consider:
- The term "domestic violence" to encompass all groups without defining "family" too restrictively.
- Changing "violence" to "abuse" in the term "family violence" as it is restrictive, albeit effective.

Proposed Definitions

- It is an attempt to control, to influence behaviour through intimidation, physical force, finances, manipulation and guilt.
- "Abuse" is a violation of trust in relationships and is manifested in physical, psychological, emotional and economic forms.
- Expand the definition of "family violence" to include: child abuse, child sexual abuse, child witness of abuse, wife abuse, husband abuse, elderly abuse, institutional abuse, sexual assault: intimate, stranger, public. The forms of abuse should include: physical, sexual, psychological, economic, destruction of property/pets, neglect, deprivation, verbal and emotional abuse. Women are the majority of victims for adult violence.
- "Violence" is the action, conscious or unconscious, by the offender aimed at controlling the victim's behaviour by the inducement of fear and the destruction of self-esteem. Underlying all abuse is a power imbalance between offender and victim, though the causes often transcend this.

SECTION THREE: RESEARCH

Discussion notes and recommendations for the topic of research focused on the identification of policy issues and research topics. While research on the incidence of violence is required, it is also important to study non-violent family, community and societal systems, attitudes and values which perpetuate violence and forms of violence other than physical. Provincial academic research should be valued more highly by the federal government, and all studies should be available nationally.

Discussion Notes

We may be too centred on our own research and could forget some other important aspects.

The limitation of research is that we can never determine cause and effect. We have already learned it is prevalent enough to do something about causes to suggest intervention areas.

Spousal violence – research on sentencing procedures needed. We are always studying the cause of violence rather than what is going on at the victim's level.

Studies have shown that no link can be made between these related factors. These factors reinforce but do not confirm.

We know more than before, but we cannot know too much to achieve more precision.

A concern was raised about concentrating too much on research results when the "real" issue in family violence is dominance, power and control.

Research and evaluation process provides numbers.

Mail-out questionnaires have serious limits: mail gets thrown out by perpetrators; generally not useful.

Most research has been contractual and government "deep sixes" the study if they do not like it. Problem with calling tune too much "telling ourselves."

Recommendations

Need:

- To look at attitudes and values re: condoning violence in existing institutions (the way we did with people); a study on sentencing procedures for perpetrators.
- To use and distribute provincial and academic research. The Federal Government has chosen not to get involved in provincial research. It does ensure at the college level that research on the subject is done and publicized.
- To define "family" as a research topic.
- Much research is needed to specify the type of violence and its importance. The more we talk about it, the less we know.
- Greater attention to be paid to Canadian research (versus U.S.) as policy and practice are influenced by research; therefore they need to pay greater attention to research results but policy and program development are perceived not to be connected to research.
- A national survey on incidence.
- To research specific issues before a tight definition is given to "family violence."
- To know where we've been to know where we should be going.
- More research to answer our questions.
- More research into "non-violent" systems (communities, cultures etc) with cross-cultural comparisons.
- Research and evaluation on sexual abuse prevention programs (long-term effects on children and their families).
- Research on elderly abuse.
- To know who will do research and where will funding come from. Maybe government should not be involved. Funding should go over to groups.

Know:

- Still very little about the evolution of violence in terms of eras, of cultures.
- A great deal about physical violence, but we still have much to learn.
- A great deal about the other forms of violence.

Use: Infrastructure of womens' movement to gather information, disseminate and organize events.

Study:

- The impact of male stereotypes on the behaviour of violent men.
- The level and incidence of abuse and identify conceptual plans to deal with it that have educational, social, economic and legal components.
- And promote ways in which children can learn about non-violent behaviours and sexual equality.
- Power and economic disparities that contribute to acts of violence and abuse.
- Families and social systems where violence and abuse do not occur in order to compare the experience and understand how to prevent violence and abuse.

- The need to conduct more research into cause and effect: we can never determine it, but we have learned enough about the prevalence of abuse and violence to identify intervention areas and do something about it.
- Social and intra-physical factors. We should work on this subject (joining the two) in order to make some progress.

Evaluate: Programs, structures; i.e., family allowance - could it not be better used and targeted?

SECTION FOUR: SPECIAL NEEDS GROUPS

Aboriginal Peoples

For aboriginal peoples, powerlessness as a cause of family violence is further aggravated by the lack of control they can exercise over their own culturally defined, community-based solutions.

Discussion Notes

Native family has been victimized by more than one society. Our justice system can perpetuate the problem.

Family unit defined differently but no less a family than "white" families (extended and surrogate).

In aboriginal communities, awareness of family violence is there but there is hesitation because of feeling of betrayal of family and community. It is easier for victims and perpetrators to speak with community residents versus outsiders.

In aboriginal communities, problems with drugs and abuse are magnified by existence of a long history of community where there are entrenched rules and traditions.

We have discussed how initiatives and remedies change as you enter different cultures, native communities and their ability to deal with their own problems. Government has focused the issues for us, will decide what they are, and what might happen is our ability to find our own remedies will be taken away from us. They are taking away the power for us to solve our own problems.

Do not forget cultural and legal history; aboriginal community – traditional matriarchal families shared roles but imposed patriarchal system confused the roles; this is coming up with rest of population in Canada.

Research should not be limited to members. It should include self-evaluation research; aboriginal communities need to be able to do own research; we do not want to be thesis subjects; we hate compartmentalizing to suit government categories; we want to help ourselves.

Natives are tired of being researched.

Suggestion that institutions substitute for family – note aboriginal experience in residential schools – native families had no choice about sending kids to white school.

In a native setting, there is a more community sense of protection rather than in the family.

In an aboriginal community 450 people are one family, even though clans are not from one family; but loans on long houses are federally imposed. Traditional system of clans promotes extended family. Funding should be considered on integration rather than separate causes.

Native women don't use shelters off reserves and fear loss of children if they disclose violence; insufficient attention paid to reality of what constitutes their family.

Cause in First Nations – sense of lack of control of own destiny (lack of self-determination).

Concerns re: parachute experts from south to northern communities and finding appropriate programs for those communities.

First Nations organization concerned re: meaningful consultations, not just consultation.

Aboriginal people lay a lot of blame on television, VCRs and pornography. This cannot be understated in all communities. There are people who earn money from these and contribute by their activities to the problem. There is a lack of information on aboriginal conditions. There is also the politicization of aboriginal problems. We need a big statement from this conference about the hazards of VCRs and that industry. But the censorship and sexuality definitions get mixed into it from outside. Hard to do it.

Recommendations

Need:

- Charter and legal arguments to be focused on in the future.
- To recognize the hazards of VCRs and that industry.
- Self-evaluation research.
- To broaden the definition of "family" in culturally sensitive ways.

Children

Recommendations

Note:

- Children are still forgotten; their rights must be made official.
- That there is lots of cooperation re: child sexual abuse.

Use: Subjective definitions of "child abuse" that reflect children's experience.

Disabled Persons

Disabled persons require a higher focus and need to have their caregivers identified as family.

Recommendations

Include:	Caregivers of the disabled in definition of family; e.g., homemaker, support worker.
Give:	The disabled a higher profile in these sorts of forums.

The Elderly

*There is no reason to make a person feel unworthy because he is **70 or 75.***

Elderly victims of abuse experience neglect, violence and infantilization at the hands of their partners, families, caregivers and institutional staff. Overwhelmingly, abuse is associated with care and/or economic dependency. Vulnerability is exacerbated by fear of exposure of past abusive behaviours towards their children, loss of family connections or institutionalization. Ultimately, the right to disclose and make their own decisions should be respected.

Discussion Notes

In the case of elder abuse, institution staff is in some cases "family."

Literature on the aged concerning abuse indicates that in most cases the victims are women. We must not slide away from or lose this concept.

Double reason for secrecy – abused by children they raised and were perhaps abusive too; as dependency of elderly women changes, then abuse should stop; elder abuse tends to happen when the perpetrators are dependent on the older person.

The report of committee on abuse/violence against persons over 60 is presented to the work group – that resource people be with the elderly in clandestine nursing homes – final report.

People think of violence against the elderly within the family context. It is first of all abuse between two persons. The husband/wife relationship is a barrier that encourages violence. It is easier to condemn an aggression that occurs on the street between two strangers.

Concern over insidious neglect in homes for special care of the elderly.

Infantilization treatment of seniors in institutions who require assistance in living; attitude of doctors toward older people – not taken seriously, uncaring, prescription misuse, overmedication; seniors housing – problems with age-integrated; ageism – societal attitudes. Perceptions: elder abuse viewed differently even if "spouse abuse" not treated the same; although same problems, just older participants. Transfer of medication among seniors; children of elderly often overprotective.

Violence of elderly couples exists where one is cognitively impaired; family violence definition may be too broad to pick up these special precursors.

"Solutions" are often more sensitive to the caregiver than the victim.

In the case of elder abuse where the primary caregivers are women who were possibly themselves raised without violence in a traditional setting, caregiver stress may accumulate to the breaking point.

Elder abuse should have immediate reaction in terms of documenting, better reporting mechanisms -institutions (elder abuse, over-medication); home (relationship between children and parents); con games. Disclosure is very rare. Elders who abused child and now being abused by child; elders often go into depression about abuse and are difficult to treat in mental health community. Sexual abuse (very seldom reported to police). Thefts/ UIC payments; option for peer support programs (workers receive as much/more from this counselling); also exists in aboriginal communities.

We are convinced the standards of care in institutions are not high enough.

No tracking system of staff in instititutions who abuse; e.g., may be let go but get job in another institution.

"Unless there is an attempt to be consistent in our language and concepts we will never be able to develop a consensus which will lead to the political will for change."

Have to be clear about terminology we use: concretely define what it (further victimization by institutions) means – public policy depends on understanding of terminology. Words have powerful implications. To develop policy we all need to understand what we're talking about.

Older women between ages 60-65, dependent on husband's income, don't have pension or own bank accounts so have to stay in relationship; therefore, difficulties of older women who stay in elder abuse relationships.

Has not been dealt with adequately in this workshop: too much focus on institutional abuse but only 4-5% of elderly are in institutions. Therefore most of them live outside of institutions; should be looking at elder abuse on a daily basis in the home. Majority of elder abuse is really spouse abuse past the age of 60: continued.

Specific concerns of elderly: financial exploitation is another part of elder abuse. Reality is that abuser is dependent on older victim for housing, financial resources, emotional support. New studies from U.S. support this. Older caregivers under a lot of stress and apply for service assistance but do not abuse persons under their care. Most of the abuse is 72-year-old women with a 37-year-old alcoholic son. Dementia with age also affects elder abuse. Cognitive impairment is only in minority of cases; most of them are fine mentally and aware of making choices. Legislation issue to protect elderly: mandatory reporting or mandatory intervention? What is involved in protecting vulnerable adult?

How many elderly are there? Percentage wise before legislation. Self-neglect is a problem as well. What gives us the right to make choices for elderly? One participant felt should make choices for elderly same as children. Lot of disagreement over this: don't do this with the general population. Need to allow them to make own decision up to a point but where is that point? Lot of grey area in elder abuse – who makes the choices and on what basis? Is there a parallel between battered women and elder abuse? Victim blaming, looking at elderly and saying that there's something about them that causes them to be abused. In cases where sons, daughters are offenders there is some kind of substance abuse or mental health impairment and exploiting individuals. Stressed caregiver burnout may be a contributing factor in elder abuse but not paramount. One participant feels that stressed caregivers may be left out of funding purposes. If elderly couple is together with one person changing and getting dementia, the other partner doesn't understand – denial phase occurs.

A lot of elder abuse behind closed doors – lot of stress not as visible as child and wife abuse.

Recommendations

Need:

- To examine areas broader than the family; third-party care is more so for elderly.
- An immediate reaction in terms of documenting and better reporting mechanisms.
- Equity of resources to all abuse situations; eg., elder abuse ignored.
- To define the issue of elder abuse; a special conference should be convened.

Examine: Institutionalization closely; danger in convenience of daycare and homes for elderly; scrutinize.

Note:

- That many aspects of elder abuse may be wife and child abuse getting older:
- Important to look at all aspects of elder abuse, child abuse, wife assault separately.

Ethnocultural Groups

Ethnocultural groups not only define family differently from the stereotyped nuclear structure but also have barriers such as language, which affect accessibility to information, services, resources and in the end, alternatives to violence. Cultural sensitivity must be used in ethnocultural communities to improve accessibility.

Discussion Notes

Immigrants still have extended family involvement.

Isolated groups: multiculturalism complicates issues and providing services.

33% of Canadians [have a] non-French or non-English background; therefore whose traditions (family) are we discussing?

Ethnic minorities have language barriers so can't express needs; leads to isolation within family and community.

Much work is based on the assumption that there are higher rates of family violence in immigrant families. While the financial aspects are not a significant component, they do add to the stress of a society which emphasizes upward mobility.

Cultural influence affects ability to disclose.

Recommendations

Give: Leadership around values; can't just accept cultural values because of tolerance - have to educate.

Check: People's culture before interfering.

Note:

- Changing values in immigrant communities causes great deal of stress - need to support families, not just individuals.
- Doubly disadvantaged women need to be consulted too.
- Issues of race and ethnicity relevant to solutions not to causes.

We: Must remain sensitive to cultural differences.

Rural and Remote Communities

Like immigrant women, women in rural and remote communities are doubly disadvantaged as a result of isolation and the lack of understanding of their experience and needs. Mainstream policies and research designs should be assessed for their applicability to such communities.

Discussion Notes

Addressing need of rural areas different from urban - doubly disadvantaged; sensitizing leaders.

Intrusion of state into family life – problem especially in rural areas.

Recommendations

Need:

- Doubly disadvantaged rural women to be consulted too.
- Research to access people in northern communities (face-to-face interviews more costly); we have to do it right to make sure the recommendations apply to people in outlying areas.
- Assessing of rural, isolated people where no services available.

THEME 2

Education of the Public, Professions and Workers in the Field

3.2 THEME 2: EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC, PROFESSIONS AND WORKERS IN THE FIELD

Violence is a cancer of our society. We can look at it, study it or we can buy a scalpel and cut it out.

Building upon the philosophical and poignant foundation of Theme I, the forum participants designed a comprehensive education program aimed at and for all Canadians.

Section One focuses on public awareness and education through discussion notes and recommendations pertaining to: messages, principles, mass media campaign approaches, targeting specific groups, message disseminators, special needs groups and family and parent education. In addition, the roles of schools, communities, government, the corporate sector and the media are identified and elaborated upon.

Section Two notes and recommendations relate to the training and sensitization of particular disciplines and workers.

Section Three presents the Special Needs Groups discussion points and recommendations for aboriginal peoples, disabled persons, the elderly, ethnocultural groups and rural and remote communities.

SECTION ONE: Public Awareness and Education

The usefulness of including mass media campaigns within a strategy to increase public awareness was generally identified. One group debated the merit of mass media campaigns (subject to potential manipulation) but noted that mass media may be the best way to keep the issue of family violence alive. The groups discussed and made recommendations on the parameters for mass media campaigns including messages, roles for schools and communities, principles, approaches, target groups and message disseminators. Contributions to family and parenting education, the roles of government, the corporate sector and the media are found as recommendations.

Discussion Notes

Messages

"There is a world of difference between what we want people to hear and what they will hear."

General population is not aware of problems; i.e., issue and extent of elder abuse.

There is conflict on the kind of message to be conveyed in public education between including the threat of criminal action versus making family violence socially unacceptable; sometimes laying charges is effective in creating awareness of the problem.

"Being tough on crime doesn't cut down on family violence."

Campaign's goal: knowledge of the problem's extent and of the means to change.

Let's look at male offenders: most are unhappy with role we have given them (e.g., oppressed by women); response to information is extremely positive if given in another light; all forms of public education apply but it is follow-up that is important.

Campaigns to heighten awareness of what causes men to batter; men's point of view; do not condemn men at the outset.

A wonderful experience is taking place in Quebec where there are 17 multidisciplinary committees made up of various agencies and the government is taking charge; these groups constitute an excellent vehicle for spreading information; the elements missing from these groups - judges and doctors.

The future: following conclusions/recommendations — different means for spreading information:

- Participation of the groups involved.
- Arbitration/sharing of resources.
- Involve policy makers/elected persons.
- Adjust information for the different groups.

Role of Schools

In discussing the impact of education on changing attitudes and behaviour, it was generally agreed that changing social values through public education will be a slow process: "We are talking a generation." Several groups indicated that education can change attitudes but that we must start with children. "The burden is on educators to convey the message to the school population - the future generation."

Groups discussed the need to introduce relevant programs very early in the school system and to continue throughout academic life. Suggested subjects included: family enrichment, listening and negotiating skills, communication, stress reduction, social skills, self-esteem, non-violent conflict resolution, decision making, problem solving, assertiveness, child sexual abuse and teen dating. These subjects could be part of a basic health curriculum or offered in a social context, e.g., philosophy. In addition to the specific courses mentioned above, it was recommended that regular courses (i.e., English literature, economics, etc.) need to support positive values. An example given was the inappropriate use of language; e.g., the term "little monsters" used to describe children.

Role of the Community

The goal of ending family violence must involve an integration and coordination of the following elements which constitute the "community model": direct service, training (both professional and lay); prevention and public education; research and evaluation; political action; and service coordination and resource development. Such a model may be difficult to implement in remote, rural or smaller communities.

Violence is a collective concern; the community has a right and responsibility to deal with family violence; education responsibilities include the whole community.

Church could be one of the best mediums to report on family violence but has failed; we usually get it from the courts; Adventists and Church of Latter Day Saints could use television to depict family violence; need to educate clergy.

Churches have not taken up a role as educators; they can speak from the pulpits; some transition houses are supported by church women's groups.

In communities faced with an instance of abuse, particularly in smaller communities, school or public authorities should be made aware of the problem.

"The more community and regional our approach, the better use there is of our expenditures."

Service and charitable organizations (e.g., Kiwanis, Optimist, Lions Club) can play a role in sensitizing the public about family violence and providing funding.

Role of Government

"Why shouldn't government commit for 30 years to prevent violence?: they do for national defence."

National campaigns could present and emphasize themes and provinces could organize on these themes over a long term (10 to 20 years).

Role of the Media

The way in which the media reports sexual assault cases inhibits many women from pursuing criminal action. Sensationalization, inaccuracies and violation of confidentiality are all characteristics typical of such coverage. Existing regulations on the media are relatively narrow insofar as they do not prevent this. There is a question as to whether the regulating can be broadened in light of values in favour of freedom of the press. It may be more productive to seek out good or supportive ethical journalists to promote the right kind of material. The power of judges to exclude the public from proceedings should be used more often. We as lobbyists and service providers need to learn better how to handle the media and bring pressure on them to provide appropriate coverage.

Recommendations

Messages

Need: To send the message that violence is not acceptable and why.

- Media blitz saying wife assault, child and elder abuse are crimes; attitudinal change is needed; do not decriminalize the message — "It is a crime to assault one's wife."

- To re-examine basic values; i.e., success equals money/power; sports like hockey teach that aggressive behaviour is good and financially rewarding; in Canada we do not share clear values; we need to state them.
- A three-pronged awareness campaign:
  - – let women know it doesn't have to be this way;
  - – let offenders know their behaviour is not okay;
  - – need to stress as a society that family violence is not acceptable and that we will not tolerate it.
- Education to go along with disciplinary steps; accountability is required; feel that society is not communicating to offenders that their behaviour is not okay – look at the court decisions.
- To bring "secret" family dynamics out of the closet; there is a place for families to know that an act is illegal.
- Increased public awareness with message to reflect how the present is and how our future needs to be.

Encourage: The process to move from patriarchy to a better blend of power within families.

Teach: People how to deal with negative feelings.

Focus: On the family and healthy family relationships:

- The fact that violence is systemic in our society and is used as a means to enforce control over those with less power; nature of power is the main message to use in education.
- Causative factors.
- Changing attitudes in a patriarchal society including sex role stereotypes, sexism, etc.

Expand: The problem – not only physical abuse, but also psychological and verbal abuse (no campaign on psychological abuse in Quebec) – women are not aware that they are entitled to refuse psychological violence.

Public Awareness and Education Principles

Need: Public education to be long term:

- To challenge long-standing beliefs and attitudes; the short-term view of government (four-year term of office, one year funding) is problematic.
- To make the issue of increasing public awareness part of public policy; in order to achieve this, education is needed within political parties and at all levels of political structures.
- Different approaches and strategies; e.g., a multi-tiered approach.
- A comprehensive public education system, not fragmented programs in selected agencies here and there.
- All sectors to get involved.
- To get money from all levels: government, business, private sector; "The bottom line is bucks."

- An integrated approach: there is a professional and public lack of awareness.
- To publicize the health and economic costs of family violence to society.
- A federally funded public education program which must be flexible enough to respond to individual community and cultural perspectives.
- To have services available to respond to heightened public awareness.

Mass Media Campaign Approaches

Use: Positive lifestyle advertising on relationships: but do not reinforce the two parent family structure; talk about families as they are; e.g., single, blended, two parent (e.g., Mormon ads).

- Advertising along the lines of the nonsmoking campaign, recognizing that family violence is a more complex issue.
- Positive approaches; scare tactics don't work in the long run; if family violence is made to appear awful, horrifying, it may lessen the occurrence.
- An educational "hook" - to get people interested.
- PARTICIPACTION model as a guide.
- Media in other ways than just ads; e.g., documentaries, situation comedies, rock videos, etc.; money should be given for specific productions that address these issues.
- Television public service announcements.
- Community-based programs; e.g., new-baby packages provided to mothers by hospitals; media campaigns should not be slick and national.
- Pamphlets, media (radio, television) as excellent sources of education.
- Visual aids: films to convince that abuse exists and is "real."
- Everyday language in national campaigns.
- Ads that show that all sectors, all forms of humanity are being victimized; planning strategy should involve different classes of people and areas; include interdisciplinary contact, personal testimony, grass-roots involvement.
- The excellent statistics already developed; good track record; don't re-invent the wheel; especially important to use statistics to get message across regarding the number of abused disabled, elderly, immigrant persons.

Focus: On various types of abusive situations and populations:

- Violence on television before addressing public advertising; need more positive role models for children.
- Conflict resolution; this approach could lead to interesting initiatives using films and videos (note example of Star Trek in terms of treating aliens with respect); concepts could entertain; federal tax breaks to the film industry could facilitate production of these resources.
- Two separate issues: distinction between sensitizing and educating people on issue of wrongness of abuse and educating people about services available; believe societal awareness is critical.
- Importance of campaign to increase the neighbourhood's awareness.

- Two levels of awareness: to self disclose and to make public aware and thereby to change attitudes.
- Need to disseminate information to make population aware of extent of problem–continuous information – saturate.

Learn: How the media works; learn from advertisers – they are the most effective educators in society.

- How to access community media resources; public awareness campaigns should not be expensive and high profile.

Target Groups

Use: A program disseminated to professionals, parents, children simultaneously – would be a good educational tool.

- A concerted campaign to get to the children as first choice of focus.
- National campaigns that reorient our thinking to make violence socially unacceptable; important for children and adolescents but also for those who are not reached by the education system; teachers need education too.

Reach: Men through service clubs, media advertising during sports games (e.g., hockey), lifestyle commercials.

Note: That education has to meet the needs of the community.

What: About information in the armed forces?

Educate: All age groups.

Direct: Information to the general public and people who need service.

- Message not only to the victim (who reports more) but also to the perpetrator.
- Poor and very isolated families – a group to be considered.

Spend: Money on media campaign directed to people controlling governments – provincial power.

- The message must be adjusted to suit the targeted clientele or environment; use their expressions; identify target groups and give them information tailored to their needs; i.e. use visual methods such as plays.

Message Disseminators

Use: People to whom it happens:

- "Survivors" – need to have it made safe for them to speak out; need caution re: using victims in campaigns; can be negative consequences (exploitation) and positive ones (therapeutic) but press does not always understand need for balance.

- Community leaders and well-known people.
- The knowledge and expertise of front-line workers.
- Transitional housing workers and leaders to direct us on the way to increase awareness; they need to be able to hire people who can give their work a higher public profile.

Special Needs Groups

Note: That media campaigns do not apply to or reach all people:

- Rural communities, disabled persons (not all are in wheelchairs), different cultures, aboriginal peoples both in north and south may be left out, white middle class is not the norm as portrayed.
- Education must take into account possibility of illiteracy.
- Remember that one-quarter of the population is illiterate.
- Women are treated as objects in advertising; Health and Welfare Canada lists the physical effects of products, not the social.
- There is no action to censor advertising that denigrates women.
- As individuals we must take responsibility to act.

Need: To consider the following in education and developing community awareness:

- High level of illiteracy.
- Language barrier.
- Unemployment.

Family and Parenting Education

Develop: Home video tapes for problem families.

Need: Parenting courses:

- Individual responsibility to teach child to respect child.
- Parenting skills courses – "we don't do anything after the prenatal classes."
- Parenting courses to be universal.
- Courses as prerequisites to marriage.
- Do not neglect discussion of sexual assault and child abuse nor parenting education and assistance; community education programs are also of interest to group members.

Studies: Show courses help couples resolve conflict:

- Problem is that people who need it the most do not go; even if free, this does not guarantee attendance; it could be incorporated in language training as one option.

Role of Schools

Need: To do preventive work:

- Children in the schools (not just victims and witnesses in violent families but all children who will grow up to become doctors, lawyers, judges, etc.,) to be involved.
- Devote sufficient time to curriculum; make it age appropriate.

Provide: Education to children regarding their rights:

- Children with new, up-to-date messages for 1990s and beyond; e.g., to eradicate sexism, racism, violence in textbooks and school atmosphere; the curriculum is written by policy makers, administrators and curriculum writers (mostly male) with minimal teacher input and no student input.
- Education to the authors of curricula regarding family violence.
- A focus on the development of positive skills rather than negative teaching.
- Education programs for children that raise awareness of personal feelings not to be scared of adults.
- Education at many levels; i.e., the media, schools, CEGEPs and universities, professional schools (e.g., police colleges), communities.

Use: Plays in schools to reach children about abuse:

- Local multidisciplinary committees established in Quebec communities to address family violence issues to help develop prevention programs in schools.

Encourage: The strengthening of links between school and family:

- Develop parent/community programs, involve parents in curriculum development.
- School boards to do away with the strap.
- The Ministry of Education to take the lead by making primary prevention part of total curriculum.
- The reinforcement of positive messages that are being promoted in school in the home setting; schools cannot be expected to correct all problems within the family; need to share information about institutional and individual responsibility.
- Schools to draw upon educational programs developed by shelter community.
- The distribution of educational material in schools; need to use schools in prevention and detection by training teachers to give information to students; must go through specific school boards; violence in school often stops when reported but there is under-reporting because of lack of awareness of what will happen.
- A more comprehensive approach in the long term; "Saying Yes/Saying No" has taken a second place to drug awareness.

Role of Community

Tailor: Advertisements to community and cultural needs.

Match: Service delivery to increased public awareness.

Provide: Public education via permanent educators in transition homes.

Need: For public to be in control of information:
- Give us the money and we'll get the information across.
- We'll go to the professionals.
- Women's experience is that the message gets watered down.

Funds: Should be allocated to communities so that they can take care of their own education.

Role of Government

Need: To sponsor locally produced awareness campaigns:
- Interdepartmental funding for research could also serve a public education function because family violence is such an all-encompassing issue it cuts across a number of departments.
- Develop a family violence package (similar to the No Smoking/No Drinking campaigns) for communities to educate children/parents.
- Both provincial and federal governments to use television to acquaint and educate the general public.
- Federal government to sponsor media advertising.
- Federal government to support local initiatives.

Fund: Public education through special interest groups; e.g., transition homes:
- A national family violence week incorporating a mass media campaign which would get message across that abuse is a crime; it would be a joint effort between various levels of government and the community with regional input to emphasize the message and to make it relevant to specific localities; there would be a combined hard-sell (punitive, negative sanctions) and soft-sell (positive social development) approach; the target group of the campaign would have to be identified; are we trying to reach the victims or perpetrators?

Explore: Role federal government can play in assuring cooperation and working together in the community.

Role of the Corporate Sector

Approach: Corporate sponsors in a creative way to fund training programs.

- Corporations to assist in education; this may not be appropriate in native communities where elders should educate against family violence.
- Corporations to play a role in advertising; e.g., by providing testing on different cultural groupings.

Need: To express objections to corporations which advertise around violent television or which benefit from pro-violence "entertainment."

- To encourage private sector involvement in family violence; e.g., through employee assistance programs, parental/maternity leave, advertising.
- Corporate funding to expand existing resources and not to replace government funding.

Role of the Media

Media: To do responsible journalism/education (e.g., newspaper profiles of individual cases, television programs which perpetuate a view of violence in society as a normal part of life).

- To be more vigilant of media messages which promote or condone various types of family violence.
- To make better use of free media coverage.
- To address media education.

Image: The CBC to provide leadership – not all reporters have to be young and beautiful; a positive story must be there somewhere.

SECTION TWO: Education and Training of Professionals and Workers in the Field

Within this topic, participants focused on a number of areas of concern, identified particular disciplines and workers in need of training and sensitization, and provided specific recommendations, including those directed to the government (see also Theme III: Training/Education of Professionals and Workers). Overwhelmingly, support was expressed for multidisciplinary and interagency cooperation - "We need to share information [and] learn from each other." Training was suggested for all disciplines, but particular reference was made to the judiciary as a target group.

Discussion Notes

Target Groups

Some groups suggested that training is needed for all disciplines, including clergy, judges, defence lawyers, doctors, police, social workers, transition home workers, etc., while other groups specifically pin-pointed the following disciplines: judges, police, defence lawyers and Crown attorneys, teachers, doctors, and corrections. Reasons cited were:

- Judicial system is mistrusted by women and those involved need to be educated.
- Judges are the least educated of anyone involved; given that at least 50% of all judges were politically appointed, competence had less to do with their getting their jobs than is the case for any other professional involved in the [family violence] system.
- Many judges see women victims using shelters as totally unacceptable and this view impacts on their judgments.
- Law courts not distinguishing and punishing; i.e., "not fitting punishment to the crime"; judges need to be educated on prevention, critical mass media, positive family relationships using workshops and documentaries.
- Doctors are front line of defence and need to be educated; rural doctors do not have time to come to town; could use a consultant program.
- Police groups are a hard group to crack; they see the world in black-and-white and especially distrust social workers.
- Employment equity programs within police forces and in courts required in order to bring collegial sensitivity to current patriarchal system.
- Need to train teachers and educators: family and health studies, teach English using analysis of plays and literature to point out sexism of piece in its time and impact on societal attitudes of today.
- Training sessions should be networked among the above-mentioned professions.

Recommendations

Identified Needs and Concerns

Need: A multidisciplinary approach:

- To provide ongoing education and programs.
- Professionals to examine their own attitudes/experiences; e.g., elitism attitude.
- Commitment from high places; e.g., chiefs of police, chief executive officers, etc., they have responsibility for hiring and deployment of staff.
- The resources and funding for training; e.g., of staff, volunteers; money for training should not come from victim services; funding is limited and workers not valued, especially women's programs; some participants believe volunteers are

being exploited by a system which is not adequately supported and funded.

- Funding to universities to be tied to provision of courses/programs regarding family violence, especially for people who may provide counselling to victims; e.g., students in medicine, education, social work, religion.
- Prevention information programs are the first to be funded, and they are also the first to fold for lack of funds; inability to pursue these programs due to budgetary restrictions.
- Cultural awareness training for professionals.
- "Model" programs to train workers; field experience helps to improve people skills.
- To think about the issue of victim as "expert" versus professionally trained staff; in education programs we need to learn from the "true" experts – the grass-roots/ front-line workers, rather than academics or theorists; the people involved can do the educating; e.g., women's groups.
- "Core curriculum" which combines all of the issues involved in family violence.
- To address the problem of burnout by caregivers and worker turnover.
- To listen to the survivors; focus on the client.
- Professionals to be better trained to identify/detect abusive situations; need specialized detection/assessment protocols for each profession.
- More importance to be placed on social services by politicians and community leaders; it is always first cut; this would include funding for training, professional development, public education and support structures for workers.
- More cooperation between policy makers, administrators and grass-roots line workers.
- Different levels of training to fit into a continuum of intervention.
- To evaluate and validate training programs.
- To recognize that child protection is a specialized program which needs extra education above and beyond generic degree programs.
- More specialized training for court witnesses in child abuse cases.
- Issue of generalist training at university (bachelor degree) versus specialist training; opposition by university professional schools to provide "specialist" training at bachelor level.
- Good Canadian-based statistics on men/women as victims/offenders as a basis for education.

Note: That workers are responsible for sensitizing professionals but workers are overburdened with their own jobs.

- That there is a lack of information about resources and a lack of will among professionals to challenge abuse.

Target Groups

Develop: Protocols for front-line workers, police and social workers:

- Different levels of training for different professions and volunteers (include transition house workers as trainers and trainees); different groups to train each other, justice personnel, front line, etc; the definition of professionals and para-professionals is very wide.

- A national strategy for education and training.
- Strategies to enable professionals in the field of family violence to network.
- Educational training materials and curricula through distant education; e.g., tapping into curriculum on television to reach those in rural areas, who are isolated.
- Agreement among contributors; we must make our knowledge public and this wider circulation will allow us to make more progress.

Use: Technology of communication; e.g., data bases.

- Professional organizations for training.
- Educational television/video to educate professionals in schools; e.g., telemedicine.
- Employee assistance training programs as a vehicle for education.
- The nature of power and its relationship to violence as the primary message to professionals.

Create: Community networking services to get disciplines together to attack problems from time to time.

- An Interdisciplinary Journal of Family Violence with user support, for communication and networking, which would increase knowledge base in a coordinated way, avoiding territorial issues.
- An inventory of all professional organizations involved in the area of family violence.
- The expertise of transition house workers – efficient procedures have been developed.

Consider: Screening (or some form of licensing) for those assuming helping/intervention roles in family violence, which would take into account personal qualities as well as professional and academic qualifications; do we have the necessary tools to do this kind of screening?

- Making funding levels (to universities) conditional on including certain courses on violence.
- Looking at influencing priorities in curriculum where the dollars already exist.
- Including the victims of violence as a part of training at all levels.
- Looking seriously at invitation lists to conferences and forums; need to ensure adequate representation of teachers, of clergy, from shelters, and from volunteer sector.
- Having all the groups involved collectively approach the federal government so there cannot be a "we already are dealing with that" attitude; this is hard to contradict since none of us is linked and connected because of distances as well as time.

Establish: A couple of regional centres for training as well as a retraining centre under Rix Rogers.

Need: An educated judicial system:

- Judges to be educated on prevention, critical mass media, positive family relationships using workshops and documentaries.
- Doctors to be educated; rural doctors do not have time to come to town; could use a consultant program.
- Employment equity programs within police forces and in courts to bring collegial sensitivity to current patriarchal system.
- To train teachers and educators: family and health studies, teach English using analysis of plays and literature to point out sexism of piece in its time and impact on societal attitudes of today.

Government Role

Establish: A central clearing house:

- For training material, possibly sponsored by Health and Welfare Canada.
- Need a centre of excellence for training and information, and money to support training.
- Need a multidisciplinary training centre on a national basis with branches in provinces that link to the national centre.
- Staff development as a funding priority within federal government.
- One or two centres of excellence across the country with a multidisciplinary focus.
- Annual think tanks to bring ideas together.

Funding: Departments of Health and Welfare, Justice, and Solicitor General to produce and distribute:

- Education and training materials for direct-service providers.
- The federal government should encourage a consortium to join together all the disciplines involved with the elderly.
- The federal government, using a central agency, should maintain communication links between all levels of government (e.g., interprovincial conferences).
- To be used to expose professionals to multidisciplinary teamwork during academic training.
- To be available to direct service agencies as part of federal-provincial funding package; need special earmarked funding for education; need more people power as opposed to money for brochures; designated for staffing, education, training.

SECTION THREE: Special Needs Groups

Aboriginal Peoples

The discussion relating to aboriginal peoples centred around the need to consider and respect their cultural traditions and values in the provision of public education and training of workers. Several references were made to the particular role of elders, to the role of women, and to the holistic approach. It was suggested that use of an holistic approach (e.g., the aboriginal medicine wheel) could be of benefit to other communities.

Discussion Notes

Aboriginal people do not view professionals as only university graduates but also include elders trained from birth to use their talents; also refers to rural and remote areas.

This is shared in larger centres where, traditionally, professions have ignored different ways of healing body, etc.

Get corporate support to assist in education; this may not be appropriate in native communities where elders should educate against family violence.

We generalize the issues too much; oral traditions do not relate as well to mass media campaigns; why can't all government departments use existing films and materials like Alkali Lake video and Mon Alise series on aboriginal peoples?

Native experience: deal with conflict at community level; listen to children – they will listen to adults – treat them as human beings; teach about caring/sharing/kindness.

Aboriginal myths - patterns of energy vis-à-vis children and their care and links to family violence.

"Women - you can't live with them or without them!"; Indian women do most of the action re: family violence.

Aboriginal women are prevented by the band council from discussing family violence – need to make linkages with non-native women's groups - transition houses, etc.; a synergistic process that may have collapsed now; support group is disguised as craft group on a reserve.

Native people: importance of taking their values into consideration.

Aboriginal community itself undertakes sensitization versus difficulty of disclosing in face of need for trust in community; aboriginal community sensitization needs to be multifaceted/holistic to meet different needs.

Husband abuse also a characteristic especially in elderly; aboriginal community sees spousal abuse rather than "wife abuse."

Recommendations

Need: To have information in native language and need community roots:

- Corporate support to assist in education; this may not be appropriate in native communities where elders should educate against family violence.
- The holistic approach as in the aboriginal medicine wheel, where nothing is separate and all is interrelated; the four directions constitute the circle; east is spiritual, south is physical, west is emotional, north is intellectual influences.
- To respect people in the communities; i.e., on reserves; e.g., before going to a reserve to do a seminar, write a letter to the Chief for permission, learn how to approach a native woman who has been assaulted.
- Education for elders of native populations; the group is dominated by males; female elders should be heard and have the opportunity for education because of their knowledge; needs to be addressed by national and provincial women's organizations.

Train: Native counsellors to work in native communities.

Promote: Cross cultural awareness programs for police and criminal justice systems in order to better serve the needs of natives, etc.

Listen: To children; they will listen to adults:

- Treat them as human beings.
- Teach about caring/sharing/kindness; native experience.
- Deal with conflict at community level.

Disabled Persons

The need to provide access to public education and services for the disabled, to educate professionals, and to sensitize the public through appropriate awareness campaigns was discussed.

Discussion Notes

Media campaigns do not necessarily help all people; e.g., disabled are viewed as in wheelchairs but "disabled" extends beyond that viewpoint. Disabled women are particularly vulnerable.

Recommendations

Need: Access for the disabled in public education programs:

- To educate government to fund only transition houses which are accessible to all disabled; i.e., sight, hearing, developmental, wheelchair, learning disabled, psychiatric.
- To educate professionals re: seriousness and incidence of abuse of women with disabilities.

The Elderly

Regarding the elderly segment of the population, it was noted that specific efforts are required to reach victims of elder abuse, to educate the caregivers, and to make the public more generally aware of the issue.

Discussion Notes

There are gaps in services; e.g., placement for seniors in need of protection; help for seniors with expressed needs is required.

Elderly groups report success in raising awareness by becoming knowledgeable themselves and being available to teach/tell others with the result of intensive requests.

Elderly are below the poverty line and cannot find money to go to training if it is available.

"Gerontologists often have old ideas."

Popular beliefs are such that the elderly become vulnerable; the same applies to women who leave their home and believe that they have lost all their rights.

The elderly are confused by the different government programs.

We must take into account the above order of priority without forgetting however that the elderly are getting older, that the number of persons aged 85 or more will double at the turn of the century. Thus it is necessary to set up, in the course of the 1990s, the infrastructures necessary to meet these needs.

Recommendations

Need: To reach victims by targeting where they go: elderly use churches, drop-in centres, supermarkets, doctors' offices, bingo halls.

- To provide training to homemakers and caregivers of the elderly; although not professionals, they must not be forgotten.

- To heighten awareness of elder abuse in the workplace.
- Support and information about abuse; not currently addressed.
- Different approaches; education is not applicable; we need some interventionist approaches.

Ethnocultural Groups

One group noted that as the changing pattern of Canadian society continues, we must adapt to that change and deal with cultural issues. A number of approaches were suggested by the working groups, including providing information to immigrants through consulates and embassies, reaching children through schools, using media to reach multicultural groups, developing culturally sensitive and language appropriate programs in the community, providing cross-cultural training for workers, and facilitating the entry of immigrant students into professions dealing with family violence.

Discussion Notes

New Canadians come into the court system because husbands dominate wives. What strategy can be used? In small communities, workshops are organized by national organizations (Status of Women, DIAND).

Children are sometimes the only ones in the community who can be reached and may educate the parents; e.g., Mennonites from South America.

Mass media ads don't always fit specific cultural groups. Local areas need input at local level; same goes for smaller communities.

Cultural - may have fear of using police in preventive way because police in their country are adversaries.

Recommendations

Need:

- Training to be backed up with clear guidelines and understanding of issues.
- Culturally sensitive programs to be developed with and by communities; there are currently successful programs as examples of what might work; e.g., Ontario's ethnocultural interpreter program.
- Social service agencies to work with ethnocultural groups and agencies to further public awareness and sensitization.
- For "cross-cultural training" for staff people dealing with different cultures.
- Conferences that have representation from visible minorities at least proportionate to representation in society.
- Specialized education; e.g., how to tap into resources available depending on

particular culture.

- The message to reach multicultural groups - use of media; e.g., multilingual brochures and posters; transmission of message on multicultural television and radio stations.
- To be pro-active in education services; need programs that are culturally sensitive and language appropriate.
- Information given to immigrants through consulates and embassies about the culture and value system in Canada re: family violence.
- Education of immigrants before they leave their country of origin re: our country's laws and standards.
- Federal government to develop a package to orient new citizens; no orientation is made in the Citizenship Court at time of accepting new citizens.
- To establish difference between discipline (in control) and violence (out of control); also important to stress while educating what limits are in Canada re: discipline versus abuse; we too can learn from other cultures; discipline is culturally defined.

Encourage: Minority students to go into these professions:

- We need to go to them.
- Money must be available for language training and other training for immigrant women.

Rural and Remote Communities

It was recognized that rural and remote communities have a particular need for public education and that unique approaches and additional resources are necessary to fill this need.

Discussion Notes

Public education is necessary to raise awareness/recognition of problem by communities/politicians, especially in isolated communities.

Additional resources are required for isolated areas.

Media events and promotions set up expectations that cannot be adequately supported by trained and competent helpers and resources; e.g., in Coppermine, NWT "To A Safer Place" was shown on television with a telephone number for Yellowknife (500 miles away).

Recommendations

Need:

- Northern training to consider cross-cultural factors and official languages in NWT.
- The development of educational training materials and curricula through distant education; e.g., tapping into curriculum on television to reach those in rural areas who are isolated.

THEME 3

Prevention of Family Violence and Protection of the Vulnerable

3.3 THEME 3: PREVENTION OF FAMILY VIOLENCE AND PROTECTION OF THE VULNERABLE

***Violence is unacceptable. We need to stigmatize violence.
We have a responsibility to create a safe and caring environment for everyone in our society.***

The importance of basing prevention strategies upon the societal reality of what causes and perpetuates family violence is the main thrust of the Theme 3 work. It was noted by several groups that prevention and protection are tied together so that some discussion points and recommendations may overlap between these two general topics.

Section One provides notes and recommendations on strategies for prevention: the current status of prevention, causes of family violence, visions and values, a national prevention strategy, public awareness and education and target groups.

Section Two develops strategies for protecting the vulnerable.

Section Three explores the role of government and the corporate sector: cooperation, funding, values and priorities, the consultation process, information dissemination and selection of personnel.

Section Four focuses on the special needs of aboriginal peoples and the elderly who are victims.

SECTION ONE: Strategies for Prevention

Groups described the three levels of prevention: primary – to prevent family violence from happening at all; secondary – to prevent it from happening again; and tertiary – to help people deal with the trauma of the event. Although primary prevention is essential to break the cycle, we need prevention strategies at all three levels. It was noted that the need for prevention applies not only to violence within families but also to abuse within institutions by caregivers.

Discussion Notes

Current Status

There was much discussion about the current situation – "We are presently in a position of damage control rather than prevention." – and reflections about why we are in this state. Reasons stated were as follows:

We keep pouring money into institutions that actually perpetuate the problem of violence and abuse. In-services, policies, programs, etc., that address the roots of the problems would help to reduce both violence and costs.

Discussion started with statement made during plenary session that family violence is not being taken seriously enough to unsettle government because we as caretakers aren't taking it seriously enough to push the government to do something more. Is family violence important enough? Do we believe it is serious enough? Does government believe it is serious enough? Government does not seem to, because budget cuts have been made to women's and other programs. There have been cuts in funding to most ministries, and there have been no increased family violence moneys despite recommendations.

The problem is that the issue is seen as someone else's problem – not that of the politicians or decision makers.

The following additional points were noted:

Family violence is seen as a woman's problem – probably since majority of victims are female. We need to be aware of male victims. Violence is a societal issue – terming violence a woman's issue shuts out men and limits the extent to which violence is addressed.

In dealing with issues or general categories of abuse, the response is still fragmented. The focus should be on violence and the protection of various groups that are being violated.

Most attorneys involved in family law are women. Women have the role of spectator in these situations. Both sexes must participate in arriving at a solution to the problem.

Intervention strategies must be directed to social and economic structures. There are a number of politically powerful individuals who do not see family violence as an important problem. Not only is there an attitude problem but also ignorance. A lot of individuals should be sensitized to the problem. We need government commitment and agreement in principle.

For primary prevention, early detection and multidisciplinary approaches are needed. There was a momentum about 10 years ago but it seems we are in a slump. We need to mobilize communities to request services. Visibility must be ongoing, concerted long-term effort. Political will is derived from community. We shouldn't get discouraged but recognize this as an unfortunate reality of the process and that the problems need to be addressed. People aren't generally as interested in abuse as in drinking and driving, etc. Possible need to start in own backyards and remain persistent in efforts. Groundswell must come from the community in order to develop community will.

Underlying Causes of Family Violence

As a prelude to discussing prevention strategies, groups focused on the underlying causes of family violence, citing the imbalance of power, patriarchy and socialization as contributing factors. The relation of alcohol and drug abuse to family violence and the need to address this within a strategy for prevention was mentioned. It was noted that the power issue is bigger than family violence; it is rooted in all of our interactions as we embrace "power over" in our homes, our workplaces, our institutions and our governments. The discussion points from this theme relating to the causes of family violence have been included with points in Theme I: Section Two (p.85).

Visions and Values

There were a number of discussion points made regarding our need as a society to have "vision" and clear values in order to develop prevention strategies on family violence.

We need vision in order to develop strategies.

We are products of the society which has trained us in dominance.

We need the values so we know where we have to go and what we have to do. The message has not been made clear.

We need to purge ourselves of society's brutal systems. We teach kids brutality.

We need to change beliefs and attitudes inherent in our society that support sexism and racism and ageism.

"Women are not looked upon by society as equals. We do not value women." Being attached to a male starts at a young age when girls are told that success is based on finding and keeping a male.

To break the cycle of family violence, we need to empower all members of our society, particularly women, children, elderly.

Violence becomes acceptable when the aggressor has problems – we must change this. There is some room for sympathizing with aggressors, but only at the risk of adversely affecting the victims rights (what you did is not right).

A product marketing plan is needed: violence is unacceptable (period). The deterrent effect is an important key element (like impaired driving). We should not sympathize with aggressors (this does not help them).

We cannot compartmentalize approaches; aboriginal view includes all groupings of all people in the circle. Looking to spirituality is important but where you look is also important. Christianity is not the answer for all. One definition is not enough; we must distinguish spirituality versus religion or church. The one model, one religion, one view, one family type does not work.

We need to personalize how violence affects everybody.

Change social structure to reduce competition, to value each for their abilities, to promote excellence by non-competitive means.

Women need to be more supportive of each other.

We must look for an attitudinal change on the part of both men and women to the notion of equality and power not being in short supply and in need of being fought over but rather power rests within each of us.

Any prevention must begin with the changing of the power relationships.

We need to frame practical solutions in context of rights of individuals. What are the basic expectations that any person can expect?

We do need vision in order to help us find our way.

There are two approaches: carrot or stick; "no time for carrots, we need sticks – people need help"; carrots educate; stick may not be more effective; radical change is abrupt and has costs.

Too often we polarize people. We all have the potential to be violent. Need to talk about it more in order to sensitize people; without a vision we get a "catch them" attitude.

Environmental message is easy; we all benefit from a clean environment. How do we do it for family violence without demeaning the victim? We perpetuate violence.

Universal values preclude guilt. We need to put them across and there will be no guilt.

Dialogue opens up values and brings them out. We need to teach people to take ownership over their feelings.

Anger needs to be discussed more. We need to deal with it; teach how to deal with it, particularly men. It is a real feeling and needs to be dealt with.

Need for clear and direct message of unacceptable behaviour; need to change unacceptable values but give thought to what we replace them with (e.g., care more about intervention and prevention of violence).

The fact that there exists an hierarchy of power requires a certain response; hierarchy does not equate with order. There are other forms. We need to give people in power an alternative before they will be willing to give it up.

Patriarchal system in society – no alternatives to this model; feminist perspective to replace patriarchy?

We do not want a matriarchal society, but an egalitarian society.

Aboriginal view that all are equal in this creation; humans are the brothers and sisters of the animals and we need to replace hierarchy with equality and cooperation.

Main themes of discussion: community-based responses are needed and should be supported; spirituality is needed to ensure that the vulnerable are protected; structure of society needs to be re-thought and reconstituted to do away with hierarchy and the power struggles that flow from it.

A National Prevention Strategy

Several groups addressed the need for a national prevention strategy on family violence. They questioned whether a national prevention campaign would meet everyone's needs, given the different developmental stages of all provinces. However, assuming prevention strategies would be developed within contexts (e.g., provincial, regional, ethnocultural, aboriginal, isolated, non-mainstream), strategies aimed at all socio-economic classes and all cultural groups would demonstrate that the problem is indeed a pervasive one. A national theme decentralized in favour of the provinces, regions, etc., would be effective and important. It was agreed by all groups that community ownership of the problem and community leadership in deciding on what is needed is extremely important in designing strategies to deal with the problem. The solution to the problem will not come from the people on the mountain, but from those in the plain. There is a need to rely on grass-roots organizations that are on the forefront and have the initiative to bring issues to the federal and provincial governments.

In summary, the groups indicated that prevention strategies need to involve all sectors and jurisdictions and to utilize multifaceted approaches. The strategies discussed were related to public awareness/education, policy and legislation, and strengthening community involvement. For example, we need to look at crime prevention and lifestyle training rather than highlighting any one focus; there is a need to look at all areas at the same time.

Public Awareness and Education

Public awareness/education was identified by all groups as a key prevention-oriented strategy. In the context of prevention, this was seen to be much wider than the mass media campaign approach elaborated on in Theme II. Here, it was viewed as a strategy to send the message that violence is not acceptable, to everyone in society and specifically to leaders, children and adolescents, workers and professionals, special constituencies, the media and to the general public via the community. Message to be - "Violence is not acceptable and we are a violent society."

Target Groups

Leaders

Part of preventive process is educating the politicians/decision makers. How many provinces have specific programs for educating decision makers on family violence?

Who do we target? A view that an ideal radical social change is fine but to gain support for ending family violence, we must gain support from those who accept the objective of ending family violence but not that of changing society entirely. We must speak the language of decision makers in order to influence.

Pressure politicians and media to make violence unacceptable. Unfortunately, the constituency (victims of violence) is not powerful and they are unable to lobby politicians.

As a society, we must agree that a percentage of the budget be spent on primary prevention.

The problem of prevention should be the first priority.

Issue of family is on the table; e.g., premiers conference. We need to look at it in the long run.

We must tell government that funds are needed in the social sector – for family prevention and all agree that this should not be done at the expense of existing services.

Our elected representatives must be made aware of our positions.

Explain that it is profitable to invest dollars in reducing family violence – by prevention.

Prevention requires a concerted leadership effort.

Government must be convinced that it is profitable to invest in prevention.

Government must be made to recognize community groups as partners, not only in fact, but with actual support.

Children/Adolescents (See also Theme 2: Role of School, p. 110)

"Resocialization of children is necessary."

We must attack the problem among children, adolescents and special risk groups.

Schools and front-line organizations in the community are the quickest means of promoting prevention (promoting a theme of "non-violence").

More or less agreement with sexism; but starting very early with children. E.g., "My body is my body"; similar video on non-violence.

The school system can do a great deal to help people act as concerned citizens:

- by making students see violence as unacceptable (just like drinking and driving is taught to be unacceptable).
- by having specific strategies to help people find answers to the question: "What do you do if...?" (e.g., if you know your neighbour is beating his child).

Note concern with minor sports – competitiveness, control, power abuse. Schools and our society stress competition too much. Violence against women (while an example of this) comes from a deeper level of society's power imbalance.

Isolation of children in emotional sense; peer counselling, media literacy; these things are hard to get into school – why? Linked to funding – power structures in education boards/trustees control.

Family life programs should be started at kindergarten level. Role modelling on native methods is excellent for educating these children.

Prevention groups for children must be included. What about family life centres working in prevention?

Allow expression of feelings in children.

Use peer theatrical groups to exhibit skills, values, assertiveness.

Need to teach children right to their own body's sanctity and also that others have the same right.

Many community assault centres and transition homes provide programs with children; can build on these.

We need children's television shows with positive role models and good relationships.

Training and Education of Professionals and Workers

Groups identified the need for judges, police, lawyers and doctors to be better educated in family violence. It was pointed out that there is an avoidance of involvement in painful emotional issues by many professionals despite their caring. The issue goes back to education and its value and role in primary prevention, in teaching acceptable and non-acceptable behaviour. Networking to meet professionals in other disciplines and front-line workers was recommended. The specific discussion points have been included in Theme II: Education and Training of Professions and Workers (p. 118).

Media

Removal of pornography (e.g., wet T-shirt contests, strip bars); question structure and power base, decision making.

Via the media (increased exposure for children, etc.), we are becoming desensitized to various forms of family violence, especially in subtle sexual context; question of censorship and rights issue.

Media coverage focuses on dangerous places, excluding the household.

The Community

Target of prevention is the community so that total population benefits.

Family violence as a community responsibility means that a community agency looks after situation. We don't interfere; we call the police. We are conditioned not to interfere in violent situations. We have to resolve to do something personally.

There is the power within the community to bring about social change; the most impact will happen at community level (rather than national level) through networking; decentralize policy making and programming.

Targeting attitudes re: accepting or tolerating victimization, acceptance or not seeing any alternatives. It's not acceptance if a woman doesn't have free will. "There are no absolutes when it comes to values and culture."

Neighbourhood Watch should not just be for property; onus is on the community to protect people.

Policy and Legislation

Multidisciplinarian committees are important so we can try to reach a conclusion on the complexities by people involved in all areas.

Disagreement with sexism as a goal: change the socio-economics of women and children – poverty; Wilson budget affects Canadian families. Recommendation: readjust the socio-economic level of families; equal pay for women.

Economics of our support system are important.

Poverty is one of the worst forms of violence. Present policy is to do nothing. Women, children, and the elderly must first be taken care of.

Relationship between poverty and sexism – poverty of single-parent women.

Coming back to sexism and violence; institutionalized sexism generates poverty, income inequities at all levels of structure.

One participant mentioned that many representations have been made to the governments in this respect, but the latter has chosen to disregard their requests.

Sometimes it is difficult to predict potential violence, particularly in policing. However, often there are predictors. There appears to be little legislation regarding policing and service area in terms of preventive strategy.

Strengthening Community Involvement

Integration of people is viewed as different; tends to make them less vulnerable - not ghettoized.

Services for children aged 15-16 plus are often not available. These children are in the "in-between years" of dependence/independence and do not neatly fit into a group.

Issue of prevention: lots of community initiatives – shelters, outreach, school programs; etc. Need mechanisms for sharing these initiatives. A lot there that we don't know – share what is innovative.

Shelters also play a role in prevention. This needs to be acknowledged. They are not visible (unlike women's centres that can give prevention and education a public face).

An American study has shown a decrease in violence whenever transition houses, quick and comprehensive judicial processes and adequate and immediate preventive services are available.

We abdicate our responsibilities to policing rather than to the communities; need to be more involved in communities. However, creating a small-town environment does not work in cities. With native communities, there is an "idealism," a "scribed status" or understanding of procedures and roles; there is difficulty imposing this on large communities. There, people "don't want to get involved." We support Neighbourhood Watch idea, but someone noted a difference in the number of reports in "high" and "low" class areas. Lifestyle of these classes, particularly "high" class, places restrictions on reporting. How do we reach the upper class with education and crime prevention? How about educating in workplace since most upper-middle-class couples work? Reach employers as well as employees through employee assistance programs. Individual agencies giving presentations to various groups, associations, etc. How different is Neighbourhood Watch from our own responsibility? It seems to formalize the reporting process. We should organize entire city in Neighbourhood Watch. However, the "victim" families often isolate themselves.

Give money to community groups; mixed organizations: men and women. Study sexism together.

Public health nurses should be funded for programs like those for newborns and their physical needs but extend to issues of bonding, meeting the psychological needs of child. They also need the support systems to follow up; e.g., "Nobody's Perfect". This is only one area but an example of prototype; these programs must be culturally sensitive.

Police are an essential part of the solution to the problem. There is a distinction between children and adult females. Nonetheless, the police response has traditionally not been as effective as it might have been. Police can identify the lethality of the situation; they have an opportunity for prevention. Every officer should recognize that potential role. Police should not treat differently an assault that occurs in the home versus one on the street. Services, of course, need to be there if one is to offer help.

Need sympathetic understanding from officers on the street as well as through to the Police Chiefs Association so that perpetrator can be removed. Removing women makes it seem it is her problem, her fault, which leads to secondary victimization.

Recommendations

Visions and Values

Beliefs:

- Values should be clearly stated at the outset of a family violence prevention strategy; those values must be clearly articulated and must reflect community values.

- Vision required to develop strategies – we are products of a society which has trained us in dominance.
- Women should be more supportive of each other.

Need: To purge ourselves of society's brutal systems – we teach kids brutality.

- To change beliefs and attitudes inherent in our society that support sexism, racism and ageism.
- To empower all members of our society, particularly women, children and the elderly in order to break the cycle of violence.
- To personalize how violence affects everybody.
- To change social structure to reduce competition, to value all persons for their abilities, to promote excellence by non-competitive means.
- To frame practical solutions in context of rights of individuals.
- To teach people to take ownership of their feelings.
- To take steps to generate acceptance of the seriousness of the issue among men who work in agencies and organizations relevant to the effort to prevent violence against women and children.
- To develop an acceptable alternative to the patriarchal model.

Target Groups

Leaders

Need:

- To address education of elected leaders.
- To speak language of decision makers in order to influence them.
- To have society agree that a percentage of the budget be spent on primary prevention; that it be a priority.
- To protect and increase social service funding to enable long-term prevention planning.
- To recognize fiscal payback of long-term prevention strategy.
- To organize leadership on the problem of prevention.
- To recognize community groups as partners of the government, not only in fact, but with concrete support for such groups.
- To sensitize politicians to abuse concerns.
- To act upon the suggestions of speakers at Workshop; i.e., to provide experiential workshops for decision and policy makers; these people must consult with and listen to front-line workers.

Children/Adolescents

Need:

- For schools and private schools to become socializing agents, specialized personnel are required.
- For adolescent girls and boys to be made aware and educated on family violence from kindergarten on.

- To teach skills like problem solving, decision making, parenting skills, by using role plays, practical exercises, support groups, children's television, etc.; just giving information is not enough.
- To include equality of women as a topic in schools, look at behaviour which supports this and condemn sexism.
- To prohibit corporal punishment in schools; punishment still exists in educational system – the right of the parent is extended to the teacher.
- To promote positive values through school curriculum.
- To educate young children in sexuality and sexual abuse; i.e., to understand appropriate versus abusive sexual behaviour for themselves and for others.
- Child education programs that address both offending behaviour and being victimized.
- Preventive programs for children from abusive homes.
- To evaluate public and school-based education.
- To devalue competitiveness.

Target: Abused children who come to court who think it is okay for dad to hit mom; police files and court files should have listings. These children could be educated so they do not carry on family violence in their lives.

Build: On existing programming in community sexual assault centres and transition homes.

Special Constituencies

Note:

- Education/prevention shouldn't be totally mainstream; i.e., disabled, prison populations, youth, corrections etc.
- Prevention strategies can be effected via mechanisms already in place (e.g., under-funded safe houses, women's support groups, etc.). Simple materials can be made available to all edges of the continent (e.g., Nobody's Perfect). Programs could be tailored to specific mixes of people (e.g., in remote communities). Stop the fragmentation of programs already under way which are proving successful in meeting needs of specific groups.
- More emphasis on another important aspect: child neglect – at the secondary level – also older and handicapped parents; include neglect in a prevention program.
- Abusers should be educated "how" not to be abusers.
- High-risk groups, including addicted, mentally disturbed, unemployed, low-income families, should be educated.
- "When we are looking at an education program, we must consider illiterates, street kids."

Media

Need:

- To remove all forms of degradation of women that present them as commodities.
- To access people like media, anthropologists to assist in planning prevention programs; social marketing people.
- To portray abuse in media in shocking way to get public attention: don't water down.

Communities

Need: Communities to decide on and to design their own education strategies.

- Education regarding issues to the general public to be executed by front-line workers.
- Prevention strategies to acknowledge the roles of all players in the community.
- To demonstrate violence is unacceptable and plan positive campaign. To realize that nothing will be accomplished if people don't realize that abuse happens somewhere in every family – sexual abuse by strangers if nothing else.
- Public education to extend to helping people take action in real-life situations (e.g., teachers who learn of the abuse of a student; an apartment dweller who sees evidence of abuse of her neighbour by the neighbour's husband); a single piece of literature (e.g., a brochure or booklet) should provide easily accessible guides for people who may encounter any of the full spectrum of manifestations of abuse against women and children.
- An instrument like a brochure in a family allowance cheque envelope to aid a private individual who wishes to approach and offer help to a suspected abuse victim; however, it has to be done in conjunction with provincial and local people who can be ready to respond with referrals to existing services.
- To recognize that frustration in the community will result if the entire network of needed services is not in place, if promotional and public education is done without the back-up responses being available.
- Some mechanism for ensuring that closed, racist communities can access education to promote non-racist values.
- To design prevention materials (spousal assault) for the community with assistance to communities on how to disseminate the message.

Policy and Legislation

Need:

- To draft policy from grass-roots.
- To acknowledge that violence is systemic and to develop strategies to equalize power (e.g., employment and pay equity); empowerment of specific groups – the poor, disabled, isolated, immigrant, visible minority, children and youth in care, official language minorities, multiple-disadvantaged, homosexuals; maintain funding levels for these groups; contract compliance clauses.
- A client-centred model or approach – contextual models – economic model is sexist (child care, etc.).
- Tougher gun control as part of national prevention strategy.
- A clear policy regarding pornography and its role in perpetuating abuse; the "community standard" has become so difficult a concept that police have become almost unable to act. A study of its effect on young children is needed; this is necessary in order to situate violence against women and children in the context of a message. The anti-smoking campaign and others have lessons for a relevant model.

We must:

- Change the family power structure;
- Reduce areas of dependency for:
  - Women; - at the emotional level (teach a new family model); - at the level of economics (tax, concrete support, alimony);
  - Children; - to grow in violence-free environment, to make single-parenting easier, wider range of services;
  - The elderly; - group the elderly together;
  - Community; - change the usual standards; - support for parents, home care.

Strengthening Community Involvement

Need:

- To target victims, children and youth, societal values, populations at risk (disabled, etc.), attitudes.

Provide:

- Guidelines to help define the role of community members who are aware of abuse of people they know, especially when there is no tangible evidence; members of the community (neighbours) are fearful to intervene and have no mechanism other than police to intervene, which is inhibiting on the basis that individuals including the battered must file charges.
- Better support services for women of all ages, which include safer environments.
- Training for peer advocates so people can go to a non-threatening person (at least as a first step).
- Education for children while in transition homes; they receive no education (many weeks of the school year) plus they miss the one stable place in their lives.
- A system of safer environments for people to talk and to empower them where they are comfortable.
- Prevention and treatment equally; prevention is no good without services.

Encourage:

- Increase of neighbourliness, sense of community – caring community; currently community response is based on value/attitude that intervention is invasion of privacy/property.
- Consultation with community leaders to ensure proper response to these issues; involve municipal officials to raise awareness.
- Mobilization of community by advertising campaigns; community-based approaches require giving permission to our neighbours to act; informal resources require support; neighbourhood needs to be empowered; Neighbourhood Watch was acknowledged as a good idea; also role models must be visible.
- Awareness sessions in various groups such as church groups, etc., to provide information sharing and problem finding.
- Involvement of church in the prevention process but must accept its responsibility for perpetuating the hierarchical system and engrained attitudes and deliver programming to address those items; whole thinking has to change in church.

- A multifaceted emphasis on prevention; agencies should be involved, teachers, service clubs, churches, social workers; students will also protect their peers and give information; also government agencies.
- Persons involved in wife and elder abuse to get together; regional conferences are very infrequent.

Teach:

- Women about their alternatives in the community; women love the men they are living with but have difficulty finding appropriate responses to deal with the violence and keeping the family unit and relationship intact.
- About what individuals can do; necessity to teach people self-sufficiency but to allow people to be who they are.

Include:

- Fire, police, ambulance, child protection, family violence local phone numbers in telephone directories.
- Hotline, phone lines for information in provinces when training volunteers or community members.

Establish:

- More store-front advocacy clinics of the generic kind to address all problems identified by the community, where people could go where they are not threatened; people could go to discuss problems and to get counselling.
- Interagency committee of family violence to provide information in one area and to promote community mobilization.

Change: The model of service delivery re: when people go to a professional centre, it creates an educational abyss; having the professionals in the community in strategic centres encourages preventive focus.

SECTION TWO: Protecting Those at Risk

For the sake of continuity, the notes pertaining to identification of those at risk have been moved to Theme I, Section One: Extent and Nature (p.81). The notes on Removal of the Perpetrator (viewed as key to an effective protection strategy) are found in Theme IV: Justice in the Prosecution and Intervention of Family Violence (p.186). The following strategies for protection were discussed: Caregiver Monitoring and Support; Responsive Services and Support; Housing and Shelters; Removal of the Perpetrator; Law Enforcement; Advocacy; and Reporting.

Regarding services in the community, many of the participants felt (and some disagreed) that we cannot set priorities among all of the various services needed. They are all needed as a system, as part of a "community model." If the movement gives a list of priorities, it can be used by funders to eliminate certain vital components. The argument must be that one component depends on all the others. This is considered not just a tactic of effective grantmanship but a reflection of actual needs.

Discussion Notes: Strategies for Protection

Essential and equally necessary components of protection initiatives include caregiver monitoring and support, interdisciplinary cooperation and coordination, housing and shelters, law enforcement, advocacy and reporting.

Caregiver Monitoring and Support

Our training services are undervalued and need new terms; do not put up with poor facilities, do not devalue your own work.

Shelter workers not supposed to counsel children – "they should only be caregivers" - impossible.

Who are the abusers? At times, they are caregivers: more careful screening of applicants in "helping" positions versus their rights to confidentiality on employment application forms, etc., is needed. We do not value nurturing in our society.

Workers: we are all working very hard but there are not enough of us.

The heavy burden assumed by active family members; e.g., paralysed or elderly persons. We must become a social support for some families, for example, the families of an individual affected by Alzheimer's disease. This may have some effect on family violence.

Concern that too much pressure on volunteers because often volunteer services not enough; some disagreement on this and general endorsement that money into volunteer agencies is very well spent.

Future requirements to include training for the volunteers; also need to establish the linkages. We need to mobilize the community by advertising campaigns. Community-based approaches require giving permission to our neighbours to do so [care?]. Informal resources need support; they need the empowerment to do it. Neighbourhood Watch was acknowledged as a good idea; also role models must be visible.

Responsive Services and Support

Hospitals – work with shelters to show what to offer – increase awareness of nurses, physicians etc.; can't make battered women a priority; complex issue.

Doctors and medical profession key players in diagnosis/detection of abuse because medical injuries usually reason for first contact with agencies.

Feminist analysis: women must be able to become more independent; options to enable to end relationship; otherwise restraints to end of relationship. Try to match up with follow-up. Mutual support system – can't minimize this.

Approach hospitals, churches – have women in shelters who should be hospitalized but can't be protected there.

Crisis support available for women victims; no long-term support, though.

Housing and Shelters

The fact that battered women often use a shelter several times, returning to the abusive relationship between such visits, speaks in favour of shelters and reflects the nature of the problem.

Removal of the Perpetrator

(See Theme 4: Justice in the Prosecution and Intervention of Family Violence).

Law Enforcement

The first crucial hours around the time of police intervention require skilled intervention by trained helpers. Both the battered wife and the batterer should be offered assistance.

Reporting

Mandatory reporting of all abuse – child, spouse, elder – right now there is fear of reporting. But must protect the rights of the individual.

Confidentiality issue: should workers report abuse when victim won't? Professionals' responsibilities versus victims' rights – need to grapple with this issue.

Cautious about reporting system – [conflict between] rights of victim and [reporting] message.

What about responsibility of professionals to report family violence? No requirements to report except in child abuse. What message are we giving vis-à-vis this field re: clients?

At what point, if you move [take action, intervene], are you abrogating the freedom of choice (freedom of choice versus duty to protect)? Mental individual competence is a very individual thing and needs to be addressed as such.

There appear to be no laws to protect those adults who are considered more vulnerable.

Recommendations: Strategies for Protection

Caregiver Monitoring and Support

Support:
- Employee assistance programs for staff of institutions to help cope and prevent abuse.
- Caregivers so they have skills to deal with anxiety situations.

Note: That individuals on frontline have too many targets, too many roles, thereby contributing to burnout.

Need:
- To change the attitude of staff who work with the vulnerable – respect for client as a person; provide assistance in a way which enhances self-respect.
- More monitoring of societies' institutions; e.g., detention facilities.
- To monitor professionals working with vulnerable groups; e.g., the institutionalized.
- To develop programs to enable front-line workers to have access to public education work as well as direct service work so as to counteract natural tendencies to burnout and discouragement.
- Better support for caregivers in family.

Responsive Services and Support

Encourage:
- Cooperation between shelters and churches; e.g., tours by ministers.
- Cooperation between hospitals and shelters to increase awareness of battered women as a priority; women who need medical attention are safer in shelters than in hospitals.
- The development of long-term supports for women within the community.

Housing and Shelters

Need:
- Second-stage housing, secure from invasion by abusive spouse.
- Support system available; dependent upon availability of third-stage housing; cooperative housing – often will put battered women at top of list.
- Multi-purpose, flexible accommodation, used for transition, second, third stage - risk of ghettoization.
- New housing for women and children to go to – have to replace one home with two.

Stress:
- That funding for shelters is vitally needed. Funding for support services in general must be increased and communities must determine how those funds are to be expended.
- That the establishment of new services (e.g., crisis services, information referral lines) may be re-inventing the wheel when establishing services, such as transition houses, which could already provide this service if they were better funded.

Law Enforcement

Note:

- There should be changes for when people call the police (without, however, putting such people in jeopardy), and people should give assistance without however, putting their lives in jeopardy; in certain cases, police attitude towards a cultural community must be changed.
- That protection should also include expediency of court hearing involved in family cases; again, education is important – perhaps individual who specializes in family violence (reallocation of resources within criminal justice system) or a court that deals with family violence.

Advocacy

Need:

- Advocates to empower women, children and elderly to know rights and to be able to act.
- To accept that "this is everyone's issue and everyone's responsibility."
- Advocates to be available for victims in institutions (such as under Mental Health Acts in several provinces) to protect them and their rights.
- To recognize that "We generally don't have the skills we need in order to get action"; shelter workers are not the ones who need to be advocating – they are overworked already; advocates need to be independent to act effectively; requires dollars.

Reporting

Encourage:

- Reporting of family violence by making it socially acceptable to intervene; give people the tools to do this effectively; empower neighbours.
- Access to available resources by those who are most vulnerable; we recommend:
  - – that RCMP acknowledge that family violence exists among their ranks;
  - – that wives of RCMP have no protection because police are ones that violence is reported to;
  - – that the RCMP be urged to reconsider policy of non-arrest of fellow officers for family violence.[1]

Note: That people need information about the potential liability re: reporting; fear of reprisal. Professionals should be aware through curriculum of what they can do.

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[1] Editor's note: Although policies and procedures are in place to deal vigorously with cases of family violence within the RCMP, disclosure on this topic is welcomed. Please direct concerns to: provincial/territorial R.C.M.P. Headquarters.

SECTION THREE: Role of Government and the Corporate Sector

In the area of prevention, coordination between the federal and provincial and territorial governments was identified as key. Funding is vulnerable to the tides of public attention and the funding process burdensome for under-resourced local services. Indeed, not only is new program funding needed but existing services are suffering. Application procedures and criteria should be streamlined to lighten the work load of local services. Corporations were urged to examine their own management initiatives and programs (e.g., Employee Assistance Programs) and look for ways in which to promote prevention and sensitization internally. The federal government should provide leadership through partnership with provincial and territorial governments, national, provincial, territorial, regional and local non-government organizations and services, committees and the corporate sector.

Discussion Notes: Role of Government

National Clearinghouse on Family Violence

The group noted with regret that Vis-à-Vis was uprooted from Health and Welfare Canada. Consideration should be given to repatriate it.

Federal-Provincial Cooperation

Main points: prevention – non-violence; provincial resources – provincial responsibility for developing a strategy; priorities to be set: cause – at the socio-economic level (education, employment, drug abuse); individual

- victims – recognize that children may be excluded;
- families may find way out of the rut;
- community's responsibility for prevention.

"A lot of the "education" we are referring to is curriculum that comes from school boards. What do we see as practical for federal government? Not what provincial jurisdictions are doing. There is a federal standing committee of provincial ministers of education which should be made aware about what is going on in area of family violence."

Funding

Some discussion on funding – concerns that federal funding is stopped once an issue is no longer topical. Should federal money go to provinces to meet their priorities? Need continuity of programs and funding. Front-line people shouldn't be responsible for politics of funding.

Government cannot intervene in every home – yes, communities should be responsible but insufficient resources; funding required for basic groups.

There is a need for federal dollars for prevention and promotion services under the Canada Assistance Program.

View of one participant that Secretary of State still provide funding to aboriginal and immigrant groups as often this is their only source of funding.

Look for private funding; Revenue Canada can be more flexible in charitable registration. One party advised their society was unable to get funding from a major [corporate] chain due to inability to provide a tax number. Also look at private funding but the government will have to accept final responsibility.

Significant role for federal government to play re: access to corporate sector and providing incentives to generate money contributions to the community.

Suggest tax write-offs by corporations; the government go to the private sector as opposed to having individual groups look for private funding. Why don't governments find private sector money for use by community committees rather than leaving it up to the individuals concerned? This would address the hidden cost for fundraising at local level; e.g., time and money spent to bake cookies.

To discuss prevention, money must be considered. One participant stated that family violence is the responsibility of all citizens at all levels, and money is not the complete solution. Each cultural community has its own needs.

Does the government have the resources to finance extra staff for prevention of family violence?

Concern that federal money is not going into operations already in place.

Are federal dollars for family violence programs available? Somewhat for demonstration projects versus ongoing established programs (i.e., court programs).

Problem – reporting but no follow-up available to respond, government not funding the services necessary for action.

Mandate of federal government is limited. We want them to give us the money to do something. Communities and individuals should do it; one felt they would reshape the context.

We shouldn't have to ask permission to make sure the project fits the program. We end up setting up proposals to fit criteria.

Definition of "innovative" in order to get funding is not allowing us to build on what works. Models need to be used that build on the input of the users of the service in the policy and decision-making levels; not just consulted, part of decision-making process and policy-making process at all levels.

Government criteria for reporting are too onerous and not flexible enough. Volunteer organizations need the flexibility and should not be subjected to the strict enforceability criteria. Even volunteer members of boards are being security cleared; applies to half-way houses, etc.

Example of government mistrust of organizations; accountability should be resolved with the individual groups/communities.

"Federal government must demonstrate their moral leadership by making money available."

Ontario experience is long range (15 years); it includes a planning process with 15 departments meeting every six weeks. The Ontario government accepted this and cannot stop funding in the interim.

Seniors' centres may have financial initiatives such as New Horizons to support them whereas children have no similar support. Helpline is at a very different level. Schools serve this purpose for children but need government and community support. Support in the long term is critical for successful organizations.

Home and School Association has a problem getting funding because it falls between the cracks – education or social services? Need to support it in the knowledge that it works for children in a social and educational way.

Statement of Values and Priorities

"I ask the government to send a clear message that it opposes sexism." Mrs. Johnson – her speech is quoted.

Government spending priorities come into question – spending on family violence programs is not seen as an investment in the future. The problem is the government will end by paying somewhere else down the road anyway.

One speaker went back to federal leadership. First strategy we need is: how do we maintain it in the forefront? The women did it with drunk driving. How do we empower women to talk about the issue? Not sure a victim approach will work, as we have a society that accepts violence. We need to prevent it from being forgotten.

"A lack of political will and moral obligation."

Sensitization would work against us if they are only sensitized to the negative, as evidenced by the Minister of State's speech. The speech on aboriginal issues needs feedback but how do we do it?

Make government see family violence as serious problem: not just a problem for a few weirdos – ordinary people. Find credible spokespeople who will be believed.

Government has to see that public funds will develop a sense of movement and change and a valuable investment, consistency, followed through.

Some government departments have "fashion trends" (e.g., suicide, sexual abuse). We must ensure the continuity of such programs. Persons susceptible to being victims (children, women, elderly) need support. There are sectorial problems and the message must be heeded at all levels.

Family violence is not a thing only women should be concerned about; Secretary of State is decreasing funds to women's funding program which should be reinstated.

They need to be sensitized; moral leadership gets peoples' backs up.

Consultation Process

Government should look at what's been done already, as a lot has been done; not just outcome of conference. Schemes have been developed; e.g., Framreport, but it has been shelved; requires support to implement. We want recognition for work already done and action. Do not want protective legislation like in Nova Scotia – ageist and without support system.

Concern about what federal government is going to do: What basic principles will be used to form backdrop to strategy? Will it conflict with provincial strategies? Theme that federal government puts forth extremely important (e.g., general working principles that are broad enough and flexible enough to support community strategies and activities within parameters outlined by federal and provincial governments).

Information Dissemination

Federal government can play role in identifying programs that are developed and adapted to native and multicultural and handicapped.

Federal government could facilitate distribution and information on community programs.

Federal role in funding, sharing information (as examples send out models with suggestions of adaptation); use existing communication.

CRTC could also play a role in imposing content from different age groups; e.g., children's programs (Passe-Partout in Québec), women's programs, senior's programs; for long-term goal and initial measures, CRTC control must not be such that our society becomes one of resignation.

We need to protest the cuts to Media Watch and to Studio D which are dedicated to improving the image of women and children in the media and to improving access to media production by and for women.

Selection of Personnel

Concern expressed that there currently is a trend that the government is hiring people to deal with the issue who know nothing about the issue, who treat it as an intellectual pursuit without the practical knowledge. Theoretical is not good enough; need for commitment.

Guidelines should be drawn up indicating a strong knowledge base be present in people appointed.

Need to influence selection of judges who implement legislation – note that putting women in power positions will not automatically guarantee change – some will buy into existing ways.

Discussion Notes: Role of Corporate Sector

Workplace must be looked at for support of services – corporate responsibility must be brought into the area of services to the family – not just sports, etc. We can piggyback on their expertise, such as how to advertise to recruit personnel.

One group member talked about frustration in this area, as a good study had been done in corporate sector and killed by the bureaucracy of government several years ago.

Employee assistance program of public works is doing good work in area of family violence; we want people to know this and to encourage this kind of involvement.

Strategies to involve corporations may not be appropriate or helpful to rural provinces or communities or for native communities.

Cautionary note regarding corporate funding: there may be prices for their support that you are not willing to pay; i.e., use of a corporate logo on your project.

It was agreed that corporations would/could be brought in on issue but it is difficult; we must pick and choose. Smaller communities would apply corporate sponsorship differently.

One group member also noted that to recruit corporate involvement takes staff time, takes money, and also gives government an out from their responsibility; this is a conference to make recommendations to the government.

Some concern that the government will leap at the chance to "pass the buck" to corporate structure.

Corporate funding takes away from government responsibility; the message was: this is where the money is coming from and you're not bringing it the right way. Also, government talks corporate funding when they cut back women's organization core funding – but it's not our job to fundraise; it's to help women. Corporations should be paying their workers more – a living wage. We're not prepared to allow federal government to use corporate fundraising strategies to duck their responsibility – "It's a cop-out."

Arrest is a preventive measure and has worked somewhat as a deterrent but it has also been harmful to both women – further victimized by the justice system, and men – who have shown increased suicide attempts in jail and no resources available for treatment. Perhaps the justice system should look to corporate funding for men's treatment programs.

Recommendations

National/Regional Clearinghouses

Provide:

- The information and recommendations from this Conference to a National Clearing-House to be dispersed to all agencies for use as building blocks to continue with this learning process.
- All conference participants with information kits from the National Clearing-House.

Establish:

- A national newsletter on child abuse.
- Conferences and workshops through federal funding; e.g., at the community level.
- National/regional "centre of excellence" clearing-houses to:
  - examine specialty areas and make recommendations to government;
  - coordinate intersectoral cooperation;
  - act as a resource for training;
  - research, review, and examine alternative models internationally;
  - develop standards and protocols.
- An inventory of different community-based initiatives that are happening across the country in a booklet form; should be produced and distributed by the federal government.
- The purpose of a National Clearing-House on family violence is computer input, as well as to act as a symposium of treatment experiences being carried on elsewhere and to publicize their results.
- Role of networking that would be worthwhile; that is, part of the function of the National Clearing-House on Family Violence.

Federal-Provincial Cooperation

Need:

- More equitable sharing of costs between provinces and federal government with decrease in bureaucracy.
- Greater coordination among the federal, provincial and municipal governments; the federal-provincial working group on wife battering existed a few years ago and should be re-activated.
- Mechanisms to organize people in provincial bodies as well as at federal level; e.g., provincial/federal working group; this could be working groups or even legislative changes.

Funding

Need:

- Interdepartmental communication, long-term predictability.
- Re-examination of current funding structure to include criteria and process; include remote areas, provincial, municipal; government should be part of review process.

- More coordination among government funders.
- To have more consultation to examine existing services before federal money is spent.
- To support community development from federal as well as provincial levels of government.
- A national research centre of excellence across the country that facilitates funding to answer the questions articulated at this forum.
- Funding at the community level to be provided by government; progress generated in family violence in past is very costly to workers because of lack of money and resources to meet and organize and develop strategies.

Federal Government

Need:

- To take steps to encourage corporate funding initiatives but not as a substitute for government funding.
- To tax corporate sector and take money to be redistributed to women's groups.
- Not to fund issues on a one-shot deal and then drop them; avoid Band-Aid treatment.
- To put conditions to provinces on money going to shelters.
- To immediately release the funds for all transition houses and rape crisis centres to meet together annually.

Consider: Perhaps an addition to tax returns where we indicate to government where we want our money to go, as we do with charitable donations to the United Way; this will help influence political decisions.

Note:

- That we are going through self-examination process, but the government isn't; federal government has to put a human face on policies – is sterile without emotion.
- When considering battered women, it is too easy to blame the environment on society's fringe; battered women are everywhere; why is there so much resistance to the changing of values? Debate on men/women relationship should be encouraged.
- The federal government can do a great deal to change attitudes; e.g., drinking and driving, PARTICIPACTION. The government should adopt the stance that violence is not acceptable (not just periodically).
- That a firmer view of what will not be tolerated is needed; this more firm view was equated to moral leadership; they should facilitate and that is the moral leadership they should provide.

Give:

- Priority attention to family violence at the First Minister's Conference and the Family Symposium; if education is an important part of prevention, where are all the educators? Where are the judges? Where are the doctors?

- A list of priorities addressed to government so that funding is appropriately channelled; according to one participant, there are three levels in matters of prevention:
  - – leadership – to act rather than to evaluate statistics;
  - – find out what means would reduce numbers – prod elected representatives;
  - – agreement – the various departments should get together to attack real problems instead of isolating themselves;
  - – investing in children: a good portion of our resources should be allocated to them.
- Priority by the government to family violence; they have to put their money where their mouth is – the measure of commitment is the dollars; "Budgets are the policy."
- Community development as a priority to Secretary of State.

Note: The importance of the work accomplished in prevention, support, affirmation of rights, etc. by community groups in the case of violence against young persons, against children and against the elderly. This recognition must be made tangible through adequate financing to ensure the stability and development of such groups.

Statement of Values and Principles

Need:

- To balance direct service and public education rather than to prioritize them.
- For federal leaders, to take a clear position that family violence services are vitally needed and that this is a national priority that should not end in 1992.

Consultation Process

Need:

- To consult with provincial organizations before embarking on any initiative.
- To work with national organizations on prevention.
- To continue the process of consultation within an overall strategy; i.e., have a second step with the same people involved. We should be starting from a point where previous conferences left off and deal with previous recommendations. Have a national strategy. Plan, circulate, have consultation with this and other forums to receive feedback prior to implementation.

Information Dissemination

Need:

- Communication of programs and their success so that other provinces can benefit.
- A handout in family allowance cheques regarding family violence.
- To disseminate information on alternative sources of funding to provide access to funds to all communities.
- To resume funding of Studio D which makes excellent films on women's issues.

- To reinstate CRTC clause regarding negative/sexist programming as condition for revoking license of television stations.

Establish: A multidisciplinary, multifunctional centre to which people could go for information and training and research facilitation on the full spectrum of issues discussed at the forum.

Role of Corporate Sector

Need:

- To spread the word through industry (e.g., hotel and hospitality industry) that violence is unacceptable.
- To educate corporations on how their own employees and production will be helped by their involvement and how management style reflects abusive tactics and commitment to hierarchy.
- To establish financial and working relationships with corporations/business.

Encourage: Involvement of private/corporate sector, which will be saving time/money in employee time off.

SECTION FOUR: Special Needs Groups

Aboriginal Peoples

Prevention and protection policies for aboriginals should be designed, owned and delivered by their own communities. Such initiatives should consider that there are many off-reserve aboriginals whose needs are not met by reserve-based funding.

Discussion Notes

The Indian Act has altered basic values; in native communities, it is important to rekindle original values and traditions, having the opportunity to do that and learning how to prevent and protect themselves. Legislative changes are required to Indian Act to conform with concepts of equality.

Bring in elders on advisory committees – tap knowledge.

In isolated places, the native community makes itself available and takes control.

Lorraine Berzins talked about the ailing community; a lot of discussion about the aboriginal perspective. Aboriginal people turn to family and friends, not institutions. This is a building block from which to build responses. Professionals take away the power when they leave.

Since DIAND is going to come up with money, they should give this money to native peoples so they can design programs themselves.

In Indian areas, white teachers require special education in cultural affairs.

Native needs: healing, then protecting the vulnerable; need to break silence and denial; been victimized – have to resolve, realize the victimization; obstacles to healing – these are focused on by media – treaty rights, charter rights; cycle of violence – leave one abuser and take up with another.

Will a national strategy meet our needs? Consensus can filter out the edges.

Institutionalized aboriginal children are vulnerable – did not learn parenting skills; loss of culture and traditions.

For natives, church and criminal justice system are being redefined.

Transition house model developed by white society may not be appropriate to native communities; same for native child welfare, which needs to be designed for them, by them, in their communities. Natives – violence throughout history; model offered is that of the martyrs; history appears racist to us – revise history.

Reservation about using Patriarchy as underlying cause. Matriarchy among the Hurons – women enjoyed a great deal of authority – never have we seen an Indian beat his child.

Recommendations

Need:

- To promote what works for natives: community workshops (experiential learning process) which are less costly than many other white, middle-class approaches.
- To redirect policy that says money for natives goes on the reserve because there are so many natives off the reserve.
- For appropriate government agencies to acknowledge responsibility for Status Indians off reserves.
- To have prevention programs for natives written by natives.
- To have funding for aboriginal groups who can define their own experience and prepare their own prevention programs.

The Elderly

Discussion Notes

"Canada needs a Florida for senior citizens that values older people."

In 1970s, focus was on child abuse; in 1980s, wife abuse; concern that elder abuse will be overlooked.

Ageism is still prevalent; older persons are seen as having less value. Elder abuse: is there a link between poverty and incidence?

Some work with elderly abused; common link is not poverty but access to resources (e.g., financial abuse). If violent partners split, they will be in dire circumstances.

The elderly – require protection; traditional values – activity is not the only preoccupation – mediation.

Recommendations

Need:

- To develop senior citizens groups – volunteers that can have impact, limit isolation.
- To keep older people in their communities and value the role that they can play.
- To have more people studying the elderly and developing a better image of them as useful.

THEME 4

Justice in the Prosecution and Intervention of Family Violence

3.4 THEME 4: JUSTICE IN THE PROSECUTION AND INTERVENTION OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

Recognizing that the criminal issue of family violence is complex, the group discussion notes and recommendations for this theme offer comprehensive guidelines for the development of intervention strategies based on the needs and experiences of victims, offenders, and those who intervene.

Section One centres on intervention strategies including examples, discussion notes and recommendations.

Section Two discussion notes and recommendations look at the criminal justice system including limitations, secondary victimization, charging policies, mandatory reporting and research.

Section Three notes and recommendations focus on the offender with regard to diversion, mandatory treatment referral, removal from the family home, sheltering the offender instead of the victim and treatment within corrections institutions. Approaches to treatment designs and objectives may be found in Theme 5.

One group requested that a paper prepared by a participant and provided to his group be included in the Proceedings document. In Section Four, "Alternative Response to Family Violence" explores the benefits of residential treatment programs for offenders, and the need to shift responsibility from the victim to the offender.

Section Five reports on the discussion notes and recommendations for special needs groups: aboriginal peoples, children, disabled persons, the elderly, ethnocultural groups, and rural and remote communities.

SECTION ONE

"We should remember that we are doing some things right."

As individuals, we are delegating to institutions what we do not want to do ourselves. We need to cooperate with them and give them an appropriate role.

Our focus has shifted to the perpetrators and offenders. Some feel that the justice system caters to offenders while victims are sadly neglected. We need victims programs and services. Ultimately, however, the focus must be on the perpetrator if the cycle of violence is to be broken.

The challenge is how to work with the justice system to make a better world and to institute and develop a full dialogue process so that we might work together. All sectors of community must be represented. We need advisory, interagency committees at all levels – agency, county, municipal, provincial and federal.

Discussion Notes

Intervention Strategies

Serving as background to examples of intervention strategies and the groups' recommendations is their discussion. Within the discourse were clear messages, philosophical views, critiques and throughout, guidelines to be considered in the design of intervention.

Messages

We must give a strong message to society as to the seriousness of [the] abuse of women, children, and elderly. It is of great importance to maintain the position that wife assault and child abuse are crimes and that technologies such as mediation, conflict resolution and couple councelling are inappropriate. At the same time, the criminal justice system can only serve the purpose if it is humanized by victim support services, provision of treatment alternatives and fast disposition of cases through the court.

However system is designed we don't want abuses to be decriminalized.

Must get out of the "Blame Game."

Criminal justice system gives message through lenient sentencing of abusers, that wife abuse is okay.

Philosophical Views

Be grateful for the advantages of the Canadian justice system and the rights of women and children here and the advances we have already made.

Canadian justice system is different from most justice systems in the world.

The man has to be held more responsible before the law for his actions.

The solution should fit the crime but we don't always know what the crime is.

Cannot expect criminal justice system to control family violence.

Like a chess game – all the pawns must be advanced forward – it's highly complex and all issues need to be addressed and worked upon.

The criminal justice system has more of a "symbolic function" rather than being effective in prevention. However, community has important function in ensuring that it works.

An ultimate test in evaluating any service or system is to ask ourselves "Would I refer a friend to that agency?" or "Would I want a friend to go through that proceeding?"

As in child welfare laws, may have to extend [protection] to all individuals; does society, state have right to intervene? Tough question.

Do we in fact continue to deal with it [violence] with violence? How else in a culture with these values do you deal with the problem and treat it seriously. Incarceration sends the message that it is wrong.

What we really need is something to replace the system. We need services now and badly.

Legal issues are provincial – differences across Canada, levels to problems.

Critiques

"Total inefficiency of court system causing more problems for victims."

The process of justice is unpredictable and not open to change.

Criminal justice system is very out of date.

Participants stress that "intervention structure – repressive [and] does not solve the problem."

One member said the judges do not always use resources; or resources are not always available (i.e., referral to family or individual counselling, incarceration).

Some members of judicial system don't take family violence seriously; criminal justice system is just one entry point. If no programs available, each component of the system is limited (e.g., if there are no programs available, judges cannot refer and ultimately women are hesitant to report).

Concern that family violence matters dealt with in family court versus criminal court are viewed as less serious.

There is not universal access to justice system (disparity of services). Consensus that criminal justice system is necessary, even though there are barriers. It must be in concert with other resources and services.

Domestic disputes are seen as private; courts do not want to interfere. Sex equality arguments are not permitted into the courts from outside sources.

Mediation

Mediation in violent relationships should not be supported, though there may be exceptional cases in which it may work. Mediation counsellors should be sensitive to the dimensions of violence and there should be appropriate standards of relevant preparation/training for mediators.

Mediation presupposes that both parties are equal.

Court of mediation is not appropriate in cases of wife assault - woman will play it down - abuse (battered woman syndrome).

Civil, Family Law and Community as Alternatives

Alternatives like civil action and mediation. We must be clear, however, that it was a criminal offence that led to the intervention. These alternatives need to be applied to other crimes as well.

There is also civil law, family court (custody of child, maintenance allowance).

Other types of law – civil law could and should also be used as part of intervention strategy; i.e., diversion program with the exception of violent crimes and sex offences; because offenders need to be held accountable for their actions and cannot be given opportunity to reinforce their own thinking about this crime not being serious.

Intervention models must be multi-faceted. "You cannot social work everybody to death. Some need to go to jail. We need varied options. Let the communities develop their models."

About community response (we all need to speak out), would hesitate to become involved as an individual in such violent situations – aggression often lands on intervenor – difficult to put this in a pro-active framework. The worst thing is to encourage citizens to try to do the work of the police.

Family court – if it is not a crime any more [there is] no respect for it.

What other models can we envision?
- delay of sentencing?
- public health nursing?
- supportive organizations for police.

There is an inconsistency in treating situation at initial contact. Abuser could be removed possibly without jailing – perhaps a half-way house. Perpetrators need incentive to follow-through therapy – must realize that they have to take responsibility for their actions. In Duluth, perpetrator receives counselling within one hour of abuse report.

Public Health nurses are helpful in that they have no specific association with anyone except to provide help to the families. However, association with police is not always bad way. Nurses can play helpful role that appears "understated" and is least threatening person.

Interdisciplinary committees – service providers (travelling courts, police, health, social services, etc.) cases could be heard at this community level – if support for victim. Community needs to know bail conditions – protect community.

How do you get the court process to respond appropriately? Men's services and women's services need to work together to provide services to men, women and children.

Pleased to hear support for criminal justice. Possible negative effects on victims – criminal justice system cannot be considered separate from treatment – support for victims essential – evidentiary problems – sometimes charges are not laid, i.e., age, elderly forgetful or children.

Have to look at civil liberties versus who is suffering – victims.

"It's better that a hundred guilty men go free than an innocent person be found [guilty]." If we raise the sentences for offenders then more will go free.

Examples of Intervention Strategies

Yellow Head (Hinton, Alberta) has a sentencer adjournment process whereby child sexual abuse offender is brought back on a monthly basis for sentence review on a 2-3 year suspended sentence. This follows a guilty plea. Must report to probation officer once a week. Program evaluation 85 family cases. Pre-trial model – expedite the process – not to bypass the process but to speed it up.

Manitoba: 4-5 years ago Attorney General directed that there would be police intervention on every case reported and then state would do charging. Assault cases (wife) increased dramatically; strains on wife: she becomes compelled to witness in court on behalf of the state. Husband can get case dropped – but wife cannot withdraw (by Crown prosecutor).

Criminal justice is part of response, like shelters for victims. Must be in place before prevention can be effective; i.e., in Duluth.

Successful strategy is community-based policing – take them away from power/authority base. Women call police because they are socialized to believe police will help but individuals and justice process prevent this from happening.

Tulsa, Oklahoma trained police officers on alternate dispute resolution tactics go in wearing civilian clothes, no authority measures, calm the situation and then sort out intervention and charging decision later.

Look to some U.S. models that immediately remove offender to jail and imposes need to "show cause" in court next morning. Results in a "sit up and take notice" approach – short, sharp, aggressive approach which seriously deters.

Civil means in Australia where orders remove the man from the house.

Church Council on Justice has suggested the use of unified family courts to deal with this area rather than the criminal courts.

Crisis intervention team – police and social worker/street smart approach. Looks attractive. Maybe works better in urban/police centres than rural where policed by RCMP with slower response time.

Some programs have been tried with varying results: Vancouver city police, Metro Toronto. Perhaps there are others. These should be evaluated for future use.

We endorse and recommend the implementation of the paper: "Alternative Responses to Family Violence," by J.H.C. Clarke and wish to have it appended to proceedings (see Section Four, this Theme p.192).

Need a coordinated response in order for intervention to work; we need to check out other European models (i.e., Britain, Scandanavia, France) and see if any of these could work for us in Canada.

Community-based model: Duluth model; London, Ontario model, Co-ordinating Committee in Community – coordinated approach by police (courts, judges), shelters, counselling programs – effective program involves total community involvement; Yellowhead Sexual Assault Community Child sexual assault also exists; Restigouche, N.B., Family abuse – family crisis intervener model. Police, social services and others: trained professionals respond with the police on the initial complaint. Community organizing itself to deal with problem. Components: coordinating committee; victim support; shelters; victim counseling; offender counseling; police trained to charge; cooperative Crown Attorney, defence, and judges.

Inter-agency group which includes a judge has been successful to some extent to bring differing sectors on-stream and cooperating with each other.

Recommendations

Intervention Strategies/Guidelines

Support:

- Laws through public awareness campaigns.
- Need for local guidelines or protocols to guide a coordinated response by all community agencies, treatment refusal and management of cases between police and social workers. Protocols must be adaptable to local needs if they are developed provincially.
- Local interdisciplinary coordination committees made up of service providers to discuss information on individual cases of family violence, share information and coordinate policy development; such committees should be encouraged and linkages should be developed in local areas.
- The section of the Quebec Declaration of Human Rights concerning the obligation to come to the aid of endangered persons would be a good starting point for the establishment of a healthy cooperation between professionals – develop this cooperation – protocols; need: necessity of setting up a meeting of the workers involved to smooth over problems and to achieve a better understanding of each other.
- The development of an interdisciplinary protocol nationally for response and intervention.
- Development of protocols to deal with victims of violence which don't abuse them further.
- Protocol guidelines regarding response leading to consistency.

- Each service to develop their own response/protocols for dealing with abuse cases; services should be encouraged to do this and government should assist with guidelines where necessary.
- Community development approach (through federal funding) enabling each province to hire community development workers who would:
  - Organize self-help groups for victims and offenders;
  - Train professionals (education of judges is important. The system does allow for innovation);
  - Develop interagency committees at regional, provincial, federal and municipal levels.

Note: That community responses are needed.

Support:

- Men's and women's services working together.
- We should:
  - Consider intervention in the judiciary – and a social intervention;
  - Ideally, we could force the offender to join a group, then later call him in for sentencing;
  - Ensure support of victims by offering them services to assist them in their court suits.
- The Criminal and family law systems' need to work closely together; look at and learn from aboriginal communities. Continue looking at effect of charging policies; look for support from community, legal, and economic point of view for victims from time of charge laying through to evaluation of process.

Use:

- Models of intervention very individualized – little use for self-help groups, but a strategy of using small groups: neighbourhood; individual – an approach that wastes energy.
- Evidentiary rules that are empowering for victims – should not be diverted to civil or mediation; criminal system should be used – existing committees.
- Quebec has some multidisciplinary committees, but judges never attend; their presence ought to become compulsory.
- Drinking and driving sentencing process to give us clues on how to deal better with wife abuse.

Develop:

- Our own justice system in Canada – it needs to have a long-term view.

Establish:

- No more legislative changes without services being provided.
- Think-tank sessions by specialists to feed into other systems recommendations for reform.
- And streamline the criminal justice system to help wife abuse cases.
- Sentencing procedures to conform with what is occurring at the criminal level.

Challenge: Better integration of federal-provincial areas of responsibility that cover family violence – child custody, criminal justice, challenges to Federal Government to make this work.

Re-evaluate: The justice system:

- That the woman does not have to testify; women do not know their legal rights.
- Police need to be educated – ask what has happened/police lay charges.
- Have an advocate in the case of family violence for the women/more than police.
- A protocol should be formulated so that police take the batterer out of the house. Police is main assessor of the case and must make the decision.
- Interdisciplinary protocol should be established nationally for response and intervention.
- There are proposals being made by men to arrange for shelters to be provided in the event that he is removed from his home (in the instance of wife/child abuse). (Until he goes to court the man has to be placed in custodial atmosphere – the shelter would provide a counselling service as well as food and shelter).
- Unless charges are laid – the victim should be protected from the abuser. It is very hard if both parents do not have visiting rights; children can be in danger.
- It was requested that it be put on record that judges/police/Attorney General education be provided for gender sensitivities. Educated as to the women's standpoint or point of view in the justice system. Has usually viewed cases from the men's standpoint. Think of the welfare of the victim.
- Legal system has to be made aware to use common sense on separating the family – should it be the victim (with perhaps 10 children) or accused? Police have had courses on crisis sensitivity; i.e., policeman 10 years service has had at least 10 courses in this area. Gender, cultural, situation sensitivity education is imperative. There should be consistency in response.
- "Court system takes so long in Nova Scotia before child assault case comes to court." Judicial services should be dealt with much quicker. Often this takes six or seven months before an assault case is dealt with. This time could have been used for therapy for the man involved (in the case of child sexual abuse).
- Judge often says he doesn't believe the child (after one and a half years) and the girl becomes embittered and hits the streets as a prostitute (sexual abuse or rape cases). Court cases must be dealt with much more quickly.
- Is wife battering an illness? Outside battering is punished; in the family, is it a healing? If victim says she would like husband to have treatment, husband may need alcohol/drug/anger treatment separately from the wife, but joint should also be considered. A healing orientation instead of punitive treatment should be initiated.
- Provincial legislation in terms of health should have the power to have options - rehabilitative treatment with consent under the power of the court.
- If counselling has taken place before the court case – often the crime is decreased and charge is not made.
- Free-standing restraining order.
- Quicker response from the judicial system when family violence charges are laid.
- Education for Crown attorneys, judges and police.

Evaluate: The inappropriate use of mediation in cases where violence is a factor.

Establish:

- A list of goals for a national strategy to be accomplished by the year 2000 based on the following principles:
  - Everyone has the right to live a life free from violence.
  - All programs and services should be accessible to all regardless of literacy capability, cultural background, disability, sex, age.
  - Family violence be given a priority rating with funding independent of deficit reduction and fiscal restraints.

Goals:

- That a national interdisciplinary committee be established and funded by provincial-federal governments with three elements: monitoring and lobbying; centre for training and education; interdisciplinary journal.
- To broaden range of services that CAP will cost-share to meet the long-term needs of family violence.
- To ensure safety of all victims via development of: police charging policy and adequate resources for enforcing the safety of victims; failing that, to provide accessible crisis housing and second-stage housing.
- To ensure universal access to support services for victims and perpetrators; i.e., counselling, self-help, victim/witness, home support, etc.
- Protocols/assessment tools be developed for the identification of potential victims in systems such as schools, hospitals, churches, institutions, etc., by providing training materials and opportunities to professionals linked with those systems; i.e., physicians, teachers, police, nurses, therapists, judges, lawyers, etc.
- To stimulate social consensus that family violence is not acceptable.
- To identify and provide services and programs to reduce risk such as parenting, home support, sexuality, income support and respite care.
- To ensure that every school provides a family life curriculum which includes a family violence component.
- To reduce institutionalization of senior citizens by ensuring that operational policies reflect the capabilities of and interests of the elderly and not the convenience of the caregiver.
- Ensure stiffer penalties to reflect society's value of non-violence.

SECTION TWO: The Criminal Justice System

There are serious consequences for victims, their families and intervenors as a result of the Criminal Code's inability to deal with forms of abuse other than physical. This is also the case for prosecution delays, overlaps between family, criminal and civil law which undermine the victims' ability to stop abuse. These problems are clearly demonstrated in the notes and recommendations on secondary victimization and community-based victim witness assistance programs.

The notes and recommendations on mandatory charging, national charging rates and variations within draw attention to the issue of the victim's ultimate responsibility for personal safety and the dilemmas therein as well as the potentially dangerous reality of restraining orders and peace bonds. Police officers recognize that they are only part of the answer.

Discussion Notes

Prosecution Delays and Their Consequences

Need way to access the system more quickly so justice is seen to be done efficiently and quickly.

Have to hear cases promptly in court so justice is seen to be done quickly.

Delay in trial in all our court systems – often dismissed. Dealing in physical abuse in Ontario past cases in a priority status.

Charter of Rights – everyone has a right to due process. There may be a problem because of this. Possibly pass or delay sentencing until completion of program. A lot of controversy around this because of problem of due process.

Special Courts

Criminal justice system can be made more effective by use of specially trained and designated prosecutors and judges.

The courts are the ultimate element; the persons involved in the process are not as badly informed as we think, delays are getting shorter. Notwithstanding the sentence (one month), the fact of going through the system has a deterrent effect. Imprisonment is not always necessary.

Why all these delays? Due to tutorships (in court twice). In appeal, reports by psychologists/ psychiatrists, Court of appeal is slow (cause unknown). The reply does come very quickly in criminal law. If judges were aware of the effects on the family, they would be more likely to hand down their judgments quickly.

Every 10 years in Quebec, there is periodically talk about a family court, where everyone would be specially trained and where the procedure would be simplified (e.g., United Family Court System). All this is indicative of a great deal of success in this field.

Limitations of the Criminal Justice System

Young offenders are often angrier when they come out of jail than when they were admitted because they did not receive rehabilitation.

We are giving control over to our most hierarchical and control and authority oriented institution. We are giving conflicting messages to the police.

The Criminal Code and Psychological/Emotional Abuse

Abuse (emotional) – police can only deal with assault but not abuse and manipulation; if we get into criminal acts, the law can intervene; social/sexual attitudes lead to family violence.

Only one conviction on emotional abuse because of evaluation of psychological report.

My community is strong on using criminal justice system – many forms of abuse do not come under Criminal Code (e.g., children as witnesses of abuse not in Ontario Child Welfare Act). How do we use the Criminal Code effectively and preventively? Charging aspect important. If police lay charges, the sentence will halt physical violence. Women who are safer from physical abuse have more options open to them.; psychological and emotional abuse not part of Criminal Code as such (though threats and intimidations covered in Sections 243.4 and 381).

Psychological abuse - not in Criminal Code, ("You're no good – can't do anything right;" take phone out of the house); custody and access questions are not against law, also used by partners to get at women.

Since the new law was passed (to require police to lay charges), the wives are forever telling me they're not being physically abused any more, but they are verbally abused.

Our judicial system has no problem in dealing with physical assault, but it should be made aware of psycho-emotional assault because the subtleness of same requires special treatment by the judicial system. Individuals and workers must be made aware of the important impact of such behaviour and the consequences of this type of assault. It must be noted, however, that other solutions must be found in addition to the judicial process. The European concept of violence through exclusion, often occurring in a supposedly normal society, also attracted the participants' attention.

Criminal Code is national but provinces have different systems and levels of resources, ability to pay, which mitigate against uniform execution of laws.

Overlap Between Criminal, Family and Civil Law

Criminal procedures and civil procedures do not talk to each other. Civil can be resolved but criminal is still pending (this can lead to harassment).

Cases of mother falsely accusing father of sexual abuse when denying visitation rights causes cases to be judged the same; not responding to real abuse.

Ontario case of battered woman losing custody of child when she went to transition house reflects old definition: women might lose children by seeking services for selves.

Probation

Probation officers see clients maybe 10 minutes a month.

Longest possible probation period: maximum three years. Probation an effective control mechanism? Staff needed as resources. Commitment of probation is lacking right now. Explicit responsibility of listening to victims re: conditions of probation; monitoring of probation – input from victims.

Can the justice system be used for its deterrent effect, for probation, for treatment? Imprisonment for assault. Imprisonment comes later if there is no improvement ("Alcofrein" program).

Probation also has an effect.

Values

Police and corrections people can share the same values as the incarcerated. It's a major educational problem. It affects how incarcerated are viewed by the corrections officials.

"Certain professions (e.g., police) are characterized by a relatively high proneness toward wife abuse."

Attitudes to abuse inhibit process – i.e., police who believe women had the poor sense to choose this loser who hit them.

Because some malicious cases are being identified by media, women are falsely judged.

Frustrations

When a woman claims in civil court that the man has threatened to kill the children, she is not taken seriously. Murders have occurred because of this failure to take such claims seriously. Sentencing may cause frustration (e.g., $100 for wife-beating; $400 for driving while impaired).

Frustration of no follow-up in court system.

Getting a legal aid certificate is problematic because there isn't a legal aid service for victims of family violence in most provinces.

Prosecutors are overworked and underpaid.

Secondary Victimization

"Women know best what women want."

"How do we deal with the research fact that women who have reported to justice system have stated they would not do so a second time – the price was too high."

"If the women go to court, things may be worse; no one can provide her with 24-hour protection; these women are often terrified of their husbands by the time they call the police."

Police when intervening, tend to be condescending; procedure police follow is that for first, second and third charges the man receives a suspended sentence.

Legal and justice system seems stacked against the victim.

"Courts tend not to be "adult friendly" either - for example regarding sexual assault."

The judicial system remains the only way for society to voice its condemnation of the aggressor in situations of family violence. Recourse must be had to the criminal process, which is very long. Sentencing is minimal or non-existent, so that it is not worth the trouble. Women have the burden of evidence. It is the woman's word against the man's, the latter being the loudest. Crown prosecutors have little time to prepare their cases. The whole burdensome process is questionable and there is the fact that for some women, this is not the first time in court; procedure is regulated by the government, the number of forms, the rules of evidence.

Middle class know how to get out of a family violence situation; people who are poor do not report; wives here are afraid to report for they do not have the literacy and funds.

Mother being advised to go underground with children when knowing child is being sexually abused.

Videotape evidence – note aged case where victim had to identify herself in tape and not informed of it; lack of participation by judges in videotape evidence; ignoring provisions of Bills C-15 and C-89; legislation is of no use if judges aren't told to enforce it and there isn't the equipment to allow the process to go ahead.

In policing, there usually has to be some evidence of an assault. This is difficult to identify sometimes especially in non-physical assaults. We all agree that abuse is a crime but because of absence or shortage of evidence on occasion, women leave the court as "losers" which subsequently influences the chances that they will proceed with charges again.

Women often further abused by system itself.

Police are calling in social workers without women's permission.

"Police blackmail women into going to transition houses – veiled threat re: forcible removal of children."

Women are also losers because of inaccessibility to finances.

Women in jail are victims. When they leave prison they return to economic situations that force them back; no help out of the situations.

Women in conflict with the law are most often victims of assault and need help in order to break cycle of institutionalization and destructive relationships.

Women in conflict with the law: treatment in prison; crimes women commit.

In the case of young offenders, many are charged because police want to "help" the children and feel this will ensure treatment.

Point made that some system needs to be in place to garnishee the man's wages rather than just relying on welfare.

Court orders, etc., could be used so as not to affect the victim's credit rating.

Charging Policies

"Funding will never be available to put in jail all the people who are charged."

"We would be put back 10 years if the current policy in favour of charging were dropped."

"The laying of charges can only be effective in a context of a community-wide system of support and a user-friendly justice system."

Rates

Only 15% of wife assault gets reported to the police – the urban victimization survey did not capture true incidence of wife assault because many women did not consider it a crime.

In only 21.2% of all arrestable assaults are the police actually charging; often the man's demeanor influences the police as to whether or not he gets arrested. Arrest rates vary from 76% to 22% across the provinces in terms of police charging practices because there is room for police discretion therefore Solicitor General policy re: charging not being followed closely. Only one out of 400 cases of wife assault results in fine or jail for the offender [figures not referenced].

Rates vary across the country; Nova Scotia's and Manitoba's are very low.

1981 – police charging policy in London; 60 – 70% rate over 90% guilty plea; conviction rate not available – analysis must be done by hand. Charges are not withdrawn in wife assault. In sexual abuse, family may request charges not be laid. Concern: violence stopped or reduced according to victims – no longitudinal study on this. Women were glad that charges were laid, even if reluctant at the time. Crown-based victim/witness support program with referral possibilities; it requires co-operation between agencies to make service work.

Who charges the abuser? Problems with mandatory arrest: women who want charges don't get them, women who don't want charges do. Lack of awareness.

Law re: mandatory charging in place since 1983 is not utilized in all communities; needs to be publicized.

Charging policy has some problems; it is forcing it underground to some extent and also some women are being beaten again because of charging.

Additional Reasons for Variations

Important: influence felt on non-offending member and of loss of losing that offending member.

Instructions to police depts – charge in all cases provided they have evidence; reluctance of police to charge in every case; if they do proceed, may spoil chance of rehabilitation of family unit.

P.E.I., Nova Scotia: When police respond unless they see assault – all they can do is receive statement of wife/child to arrest the perpetrator. It is more convenient to take them to a shelter to diffuse the situation. Gather evidence, lay charge, go to court. If officer saw it, he can witness; if wife told him, she has to be witness. If she refuses to testify, the judge can hold her in contempt but it becomes frustrating to police. There is severe trauma. Loss of income main reason. Wife wants treatment for husband. In most cases today husband will plead guilty in Manitoba/Winnipeg – he is sent to an anger counselling program for assessment. If he admits remorse – court instead of jailing – on probation in counselling program for up to three years. P.E.I.: counselling program for 60 days.

Maybe Crown prosecutors are weeding out differently; women getting incorrect information from police; police are not willing to intervene – fear and frustration; women don't trust system to protect her.

More information the woman is given, the less likely she is to withdraw charges - inform re: process with advocate.

Are charges always last resort? Sometimes they are the first resort. Other resources may be used but perhaps not in the context of a spousal abuse situation.

Studies have indicated that police laying of charges has reduced incidence of wife abuse; there seems to be a weakening of resolve for police to lay charges.

Downside to being aggressive in laying assault charges:

- fewer cases reported;
- punitive measures by perpetrators therefore women afraid to report; laying charges does not mean women are protected.

Who Should Charge?

Another problem is that women refuse to proceed with charges, and specify that charges not be laid. It is not just the decision of the women; state has role to obligate women to follow through with charges.

Charging policy has come full circle: women are not coming forward, and women are reluctant to give their evidence.

What about women who are unwilling witnesses? Women often don't see court system working in their favour – strong opinion that court should proceed with legal process – take control out of the women's hands so that they cannot be blamed later; rather that it be a public process for which they personally cannot be held accountable.

Most family violence cases are "common assault," that is why police used to ask women to lay the charges because the next morning they may change their minds. Now police have power to lay charges, obliged to follow through.

Deterrents

Introduction of criminal justice system decrease of violence as reported in some research.

There is evidence to suggest that charging for wife assault can be a deterrent because for approximately six months the offenders are really aware of court procedures, and are more cautious not to get caught again (fear of re-detection).

Restraining Orders and Peace Bonds

One found that restraining orders put women in jeopardy.

Reluctance of prosecutors and judges: usually perpetrators issued peace bonds which don't always work.

A man can also be put on a "peace bond" without a finding of guilt. If wife does not accuse husband, judge may still put on a "peace bond."

Restraining orders seem to be cost effective and buy time for victim to make informed choices; new jury, e.g., judge, hears evidence and orders restraint. Fear felt by some women who don't want police involved because of outstanding charges (lack of license); their involvement with police may lead to women put in jail for their offences, not husbands.

In Toronto, problems with restraining orders and bail conditions – not known to women.

Please note law is sometimes not enforced (i.e., restraining orders). Police need to take women and their complaints and the restraining orders seriously. They should intervene when called and respect enforcement of restraining order.

Policing Frustrations

Police officers often feel problem has been "sloughed off" on them. Need good referral service for police to pursue action. Most men need external motivation to change.

Is the criminal justice system an appropriate realm? Some think it should be the last resort. But usually police first at scene. It is frustrating on the part of officers re: repeated return to homes, feelings of impotence/ignorance. Women often refuse to press charges because they may not see jail as the most appropriate treatment for their husbands.

Reporting mechanisms to whom? Police, social agency, shelter, crisis centre; police need resources to respond appropriately or for reference following intervention; legal intervention systems not working presently but maybe if police always called would have more effective results; calling police - particularly in active crisis situations, emphasized idea that wife abuse is a crime.

The psychological impact of being abused constantly reinforces the feeling of inferiority; police officers, on the other hand, are frustrated by the difficulties in getting the spouses to follow through.

Mandatory Reporting

"There should be a mandate for concern rather than a mandate for reporting, by professionals."

The notes on mandatory reporting for victims of wife and elder abuse reflect the concern that the child abuse policy has overloaded the protection system to the point of danger. As well, such a policy could undermine individuals rights to control their own lives. With no clear way out of this dilemma between rights and protection, it is nonetheless essential to have adequate support systems in place before instituting any additional mandatory reporting policies.

What are powers/permissions of authority of police to respond to anonymous reports? Community police advisory boards are involved with presenting community problems to the police force. The only entry point should not be the police because many are threatened by police. Another entry point is family or public health system which is less threatening.

Elder abuse is a serious problem – workers in Quebec oppose mandatory reporting. It is burdensome and forces professionals into going to court. In order to arrive at some conclusions, we must study what causes young people to take it out on vulnerable adults.

The New Brunswick Youth and Adult Protection Act may be useful to allow health and community services to intervene in cases of financial abuse. In the case of nursing homes or nurses, it is unlikely that workers will speak up unless the reporting of abuse is mandatory. Quebec workers advocate self-policing.

Role of hospital personnel – doctor or nurse – problems in reporting, therefore breach of confidentiality if patient refuses permission to report. Recognition of abuse difficult; competency to make decisions discussed – adults presumed competent.

Possibly no legal responsibility to report crime – only knowledge of crime to be committed.

Social responsibility for reporting – definite professional responsiblility but no penalties to public for non-reporting.

Most people in wife abuse and elder abuse don't like mandatory reporting. It could lead to some cases of forcing people to lay charges. Maybe same thing could happen in wife abuse and elder abuse. Perhaps it is time to remove "police charging" clause; might eventually be removed.

Recognized complexity around mandatory reporting and how it may affect an offender's willingness to come forward.

Mandatory reporting – ethical obligation; some provinces have mandatory reporting of "infirm"; no other crime has mandatory reporting except child abuse; very controversial question.

Mandatory reporting creates the expectation of effective, sensitive intervention and follow-up services.

Nova Scotia and New Brunswick have mandatory reporting of elder abuse, all provinces for child abuse, and we wonder if there is a social need for mandatory reporting of wife abuse. Reporting heightens public awareness of problems, but results in problems of counsellor confidentiality, lack of resources to respond, "passing the buck" of responsiblility to child protection. Court intervention can be destructive to victims and non-offending parents. Mandatory reporting for adults brings up the issues of choice and control for victims. Assault of mother with child witness may be sufficiently damaging to child to warrant reporting of child abuse in these cases. The laws should be judged by how many new cases are brought forward through conformity versus how many people are charged for not reporting cases.

Support systems must be in place to make mandatory reporting work. We wouldn't want it to be the only response enacted. We don't really know if mandatory reporting works in child abuse, let alone other areas of abuse. Even solicitor/client confidentiality may not be appropriate in cases of child abuse. Need for work on relationship between child welfare and transition houses in some jurisdictions.

"Mandatory reporting is the easy answer; you can't legislate problems away (therefore we need to emphasize empowerment options for adults)."

Mandatory reporting is cheap and visible but does not replace services.

Mandatory reporting of wife abuse is opposed. Some felt mandatory reporting would force the problem underground. Empowerment of women by professions is the key.

Mandatory reporting in cases of women is taking away some of their rights, it is a fine balance with respect to their feelings, no clear way out.

Recommendations

The Criminal Justice System: Delays

Create: Ways of reducing delays. We have to ask questions of "How do we do it?" Civil law (e.g., seven-day delay to serve papers in civil law)? We need to think of emergency procedures (could clerk make an order?). Need possibility to act very fast (speed); police won't do anything without an order; government trend in Ontario for greater access to children and joint custody.

Revise:

- The judicial process to increase speed of decision in cases involving violence.
- The same must be done for the rules of evidence (the Law Reform Commission – after listening very carefully to the front-line workers).
- Sentencing procedures (property as opposed to person-abuse).
- The legislation to address emergency measures necessary to act quickly to get a temporary solution which would not affect future decisions re: custody of children (woman has abandoned the home).

Establish:

- Special courts to deal with delays in the prosecution of cases (in Ontario frequently two years); this must be reversed.

Limitations of the Criminal Justice System

Create:

- Programs that make it realistically "better" for the women to leave than to stay. If the battered women see only poverty and lack of support in a life outside the marital homes, they are less likely to leave and their children and themselves are more likely to suffer escalating harm.
- A judicial system supported by the community (day-care centres, resources); recognize that family violence is a crime just as serious as the others – the judicial system should treat it as it does any other crime. In Quebec, the government seems to be preoccupied more with repression than with the psycho-social aspect.

Increase:

- Legal aid in civil law: it is not nearly available enough.
- Legal aid funding, education and support.
- Victims access to legal services re: rights, services available.

Need:

- That a mechanism be designed to protect and support any woman leaving a shelter.
- That female photographers take the photos in the gathering of evidence.

Amend:

- The Criminal Code: victim impact statement (" déclaration de la victime") – victim's view of the consequences to be submitted to the judge – in Quebec, 50 per cent of 5,000 victims reappear in Court. The statement is a powerful tool to respond to the victim's rights. Statement is included in accused's file and influences probation. Victim support services are not available outside big city areas.
- The Criminal Code:
  - – That wife abuse, sexual abuse, elder abuse be recognized as criminal acts in Criminal Code; (revise code generally to include emotional abuse).
  - – To criminalize corporal punishment.
  - – To include sexual assault of vulnerable persons and the disabled.
- The Criminal Code so that sexual assault against women is acknowledged as just as significant an issue as "child abuse," "wife abuse."
- The Criminal Code to define "reasonable force."
- The Act prohibiting pornography.

Prohibit: War games (e.g., Denmark).

Institute: Inquests for murders of wife assault. We need an inquiry to point out how the system did not respond in each case. We need a public outcry to force this to happen.

Resolve:

- That even where we are satisfied that legislation is in place, resources needed to apply that legislation relating to, physical, sexual and emotional abuse are not forthcoming. Priority in different government levels.
- That message that family violence as a crime not be diluted – deterrent – symbolic message – if we use the justice system as a hook to hang treatment on probation, mandatory treatment could be included in Criminal Code (five years); any changes to existing procedures to be done in consultation with victims and advocates.
- That the justice system should treat family violence cases the same as other cases (no consensus in the group on this point). Sentencing must serve as a deterrent to the criminal act – sentencing then treatment are necessary. Victims do not pursue the matter because not enough services are available to give them support.

Respect:

- Victim's needs in interventions and encourage sufficient resources to be pursued. We mustn't promise more than we can deliver.
- That interventions must demonstrate respect for client; intervention models that can act early in the situation but which do not lock the victim into a rigid system – empowerment which allows self-determination.

Ensure:

- Access for all to law enforcement and legal services.
- That the legislation around sentencing including probate periods, treatment and incarceration, adjournment to provide greater flexibility be examined.
- That we support social workers, police, prosecutors.
- That violence is made a real issue – a real crime.
- That we have specializing lawyers with background, training and experience.

- That there are more services for all involved in the issue.
- That judges are screened for gender bias related to violence against women and children and rejected for appointment.

Note:

- That charitable status is denied to "political" groups – but that women's issues are political by nature.
- The John Howard Society and others should do more advocacy against violence.
- That the problems of emotional and psychological abuse have been glossed over and need to be much higher on the national strategy.
- The associations for constituencies have to be given funding for developing programs that reflect their realities.
- "That every province should be given encouragement to become pro-active: the women and children are waiting."
- That we have to be certain that crimes against people are more important than crimes against property.
- That family violence matters belong in criminal court (there are some exceptions though where the victim is so traumatized the police cannot be called upon to testify). Prosecution discretion must be used in this situation; need to make our court, legal system better but not move family violence out of criminal arena.
- The problem with the community – who is it? Shelters. People must be made aware of what they can do to assist police in cases of family violence (e.g., to be willing to testify). Relevant policies must be changed.

Consider:

- Family Court as an excellent way of educating judges, who are less apt to get involved in stories – but the procedure must be adjusted. This would help judges who did not like this role; there exists an excellent report on the role of the United Family Court in Halifax, Hamilton, Edmonton.
- A structure to promote the advisory/representative role of women when judges are faced with a particular case.

Victim/Witness Assistance

Need:

- To provide support to the victim throughout the court process.
- To have court support programs to assist children and women throughout the judicial process and follow-up. There are some pilot witness support programs.
- Victim support must be available to the woman from the filing of the charge through the whole court procedure; massive presence of women in court. Police charge of simple assault was changed under pressure by women's groups.
- Crisis intervention for the whole family to get immediate support.
- Victim assistance programs to have an honest commitment to grass-roots community input. Court-based, police-based. Community-based – some problems with Privacy Act until recently March 1989.

- For victim/witness assistance which is provided self-sufficiently (i.e., not by agencies which are doing it as a secondary service, as does the Elizabeth Fry Society); whenever a case of wife battering comes to the attention of a service provider, the woman, if a mother, should be apprised of the effects of exposure of her children to this abuse. This must be done sensitively and in a helpful manner.

Note:

- General agreement that criminal justice system with improvements and strong supports from Crown attorneys and victim/witness assistance programs can work.
- Example of witness support services in B.C. charging policies have been influenced somewhat by our attempts. Access to victim best through police or Crown attorney. Also spin-off education of police and Crown attorney. Workers may have tendency to advocate system.
- That wife assault area best chance for intervention (according to studies done); has been through prosecution and court-mandated treatment programs with lots of support for the victim coming from victim/witness assistance programs.
- The London (Ontario) police experience is unique and effective in achieving a reduction of violence. This type of social-judiciary program ought to be established in all municipalities. This model has two advantages: it fulfils the needs of victims (protection, husband support); calms the crisis immediately. An intervention policy is required to support victims in their legal steps against their husbands.

Educate:

- Regarding access to criminal in prison compensation (victim/witness support program).
- Using the existing system, which is often badly used – the Canadian Judicial Council should ensure that judges are well informed on the effects of sentencing. Each case of family violence is different.

Secondary Victimization

Treat: Family violence as a crime but do not victimize the victims.

Give: Priority for battered women for housing.

Emphasize: Victims rights as important.

Evaluate: The need for consistent national application of the charging policy.

Provide: Support system: victim and witness assistance programs; follow-up or crisis intervention that informs women of options. It comes down to practical issues. There is a program in U.S. where husbands must submit pay cheques to families while undergoing treatment.

Enable:

- The victim to be able, in every province, to obtain an order restraining the abuser's immediate disposal of marital property upon the woman's flight from the home and allowing the woman to remove personal property from the home; an ex parte order like that of Australia (New South Wales) would be helpful.
- Specialization of police and social workers to take tape recording so court will accept them; courts often will not accept social workers as expert witnesses but require psychiatrists as expert witness.
- Women and other victims to be aware of all options available within the criminal justice system and the consequences of choices.

Do Not:

- Treat women as if they are children or unable to make decisions - ask them what they want to do.
- Treat women or the elderly as if they are children nor place them on an unequal footing.

Make: The system acceptable for those who go into it.

Charging Policies

Need:

- To educate the public, judges, workers, police; several mixed messages are being given through the charging policy.
- To reinforce arrest policy in wife assault cases with the police.
- To re-evaluate and reaffirm the policy of police laying charges.
- To inform the officials implementing the nation-wide charging policy of its effectiveness so they can be positively reinforced.

Permit: Spousal assault charging policies but with considerable follow-up to address other issues.

Note: That the level of support services must be appropriate when charges are laid.

Permit: Victims to have recourse to appropriate and effective civil remedies (e.g., re: property, support payments, child custody).

Research

Evaluate: Existing child abuse and elder abuse mandatory reporting before we enact more laws.

Survey: Women nationally who have been through the legal process to determine what worked – what didn't, for those who refused to testify, what happened to them, etc.

Need:

- Information support, case preparation and research; continuity in strategy of dissemination of information on what is happening.
- Research on attitudes of court to issue, enforcement statistics, support payment statistics are important; need more research here.
- To disseminate information on models available; federal role in disseminating materials available, information on models available.

SECTION THREE: Offenders

In all of the five themes, considerable attention was paid to removing offenders from the family homes instead of the victims and/or non-offending parents. While, philosophically, offenders and not victims should suffer the consequences of dislocation, our present inability to protect women, children and the elderly in their homes is a real concern. Other issues covered include the important role of diversion programs, the alternative of sheltering offenders instead of victims, mandatory treatment referral and treatment within the corrections system.

Discussion Notes

Mandatory Treatment Referral

Treatment for offenders is essential to prevent repeats, to really correct the problem.

If not treated, recidivism rate is 16% after six months, 40% re-arrested in two years [not referenced by group].

The privileges of men who commit assault are indeed extensive and now they must pay the price. This is group therapy.

The most immediate danger for them is that they might not be released. The time between when they are found guilty and when they are sentenced is the best time to influence those accused.

Court-mandated programs do work. Punishment repeats the cycle.

One suggested more court orders to counselling for the men would help. Another objected – person must recognize problem before therapy works.

Staying of sentence until after successful treatment is indicated was suggested as an alternative; Hinton model – Yellowhead Family Therapy Sexual Assault Program. Some objection was made to this concept that a guy can be "good for a while." These do not present a Charter issue re: quick trial because the abused agrees to this delay in sentencing.

Question is: Why do they make fundamental changes in attitude during treatment? Is it because of the jail option or their own exposure to the treatment and their desire to change?

Is there another way to elicit involvement of abusers in treatment without using the criminal justice system? How to obtain voluntary participation?

Mandatory referral – all of the men regardless of type of referral (voluntary or mandatory) appear to experience similar processes in treatment, possibly at different times. Some may need added encouragement of an extra weekend/week in jail. Court-mandated men will see that others are there voluntarily and this is an incentive for them. One important point is that a very small percentage of abusers is currently in treatment. Therefore, our knowledge of the area is limited. Male abusers must come to realization that what they did was on purpose and not simply that they lost control. Choices again are important – violence to the perpetrators is a viable option for them; sometimes don't consider other options.

We need to know what programs do and what their philosophy is, before we can make referrals with confidence.

Men and treatment – mandatory versus voluntary – what are the issues, rates of effectiveness? Mandatory orders – could get some people who won't listen, but then again, you'll get some who will change – the seed has been planted.

Person not in favour of enforced psychiatry – as it will disenfranchise one person while trying to empower another.

Push for mandatory non-psychiatric program ranging from self-help groups to support groups.

Diversion

Legal reaction (or threat of that) gets people to change rapidly.

Diversion – people charged have charges dropped if complying with alternatives; no prior criminal record; relatively minor charge; seen as beneficial to person and community; voluntary; seems only appropriate – if victim's safety assured. If counselling mandatory; downside: not denuncitory – counselling doesn't vent anger; not seen as crime. If mistake made then we are seen to have made serious error – public outcry; appropriate in small percentages of cases.

Recognize have divided jurisdiction; there has to be inducement from federal government. Using justice system as lever to get people into treatment; women need to make the decision – consultation; post-charge dispute mechanism – admission of guilt – if appropriate.

One person does not want to relinquish the mandatory aspects of things like referrals from courts for treatment.

The law has been changed – the system is drowning with charges and alternatives are sought. Adjustments to the system have not been considered. Some causes for concern: the possibility of avoiding a trial if treatment is available – groups for abusers are not the only solution – and cannot replace judicial process. Treatment programs cannot serve as an alternative to the judicial approach.

Many of these men wouldn't go but for the order. Feeling is that once there, they do take ownership of the issue. They cannot keep holding out and blaming others. They noted that most go anyway because of pressure from partners.

Intervention strategies that seem to work best in wife assault are: arrest, court-mandated treatment for offender; if no further violence, couples therapy (however, court-mandated rarely specify couple therapy).

Rehabilitation – know that batterers will be jailed; therefore lawyer urges guilty plea.

There is a whole population of abusers who do not come to the attention of the criminal justice system (usually minority referred to programs)

Arrest is a preventive measure and has worked somewhat as a deterrent but it has also been harmful to both women - further victimized by the justice system, and men – who have shown increased suicide attempts in jail and no resources available for treatment.

Removing Offender from Family Home

Rather than having women and children leave the home, it would be economical as well as less disruptive for the perpetrators to leave the homes, possibly to homes for abusers.

Not addressing fact that people are being turned away from shelters – obviously have to take males from homes; however, have to guard homes to prevent return.

Have to stop moving women and children, remove the abusers – women leave all support systems, children their friends and activities. However, sometimes the matrimonial homes are not safe places to be and not always easy to enforce.

Often abuse escalates when woman leaves – power and control.

Children who are sexually abused – perpetrators now removed in some provinces; any abuser should be the one removed.

How can the perpetrators be removed from homes so the wives and children don't have to leave? The problem is that women often feel safer at shelters than they would at home, not knowing whether the men may appear again at any moment. The law needs to be strengthened: if men are to be removed, the law must at the same time guarantee safety. The law may ultimately be unable to do this. In any case, the experiences women have in meeting others in shelters can be very helpful for them, reassuring and of practical assistance. "Transition houses" may, too often, be a misnomer, since there is often no transition to a better state of life if there is no available accommodation.

Remove offender from house. Could be recommended by this conference. Oppose this. Legal issues (ownership). Often women can't afford to maintain the home (or small business/farm). Exploring the possibility of strengthening the option.

Offenders out of home – more risky to protect women and children – unfortunate. Only alternative is arrest of man.

Must recognize that to correct the situation is by changing the system – values/attitudes, support structures, putting system in place to remove the man – day passes in specific half-way houses where they can receive treatment, wages garnished.

Discussed removing man from home but safety issue often prevents woman staying at home.

We have to keep in mind safety of wife and children whenever we remove the abuser out of the home. It is very difficult to do this at length so wife will have to leave the area. A small percentage of cases involved because of under-reporting of many cases. It is seldom a long-term solution until trial takes place; often multiple charges of abuse.

Judge may not allow offender to go back to the home (this is in regard to child/wife accusation). This generally not accepted by the general public; also by bail as prescribed by the judge. A hearing may be given, court can order him out of the house; 80% – the wife is taken out of the house.

"Ideal situation is to take the offender out of the house"; majority cases wife and children are on the police not to take them. Is evident police should tell her what her legal rights are to ensure that women are informed of their legal rights; ownership of property.

Mechanisms do exist within the Criminal Code to remove the offender; some provinces do have legislation. Legal implications of removing alleged offender from home /child abuse registry; can get a warrant for a serious occurrence situation to remove offending person and bring before a judge when he can issue order. Where there is an objection, Crown can issue a detention; sexual abuse is disclosed after a number of years and not right away.

When offender is removed from the home, he still has right to visit child.

One of the problems is always a call to remove the abuser – men who make payments on house; so, economic constraints.

Civil libertarians insist offenders should also be protected; can offenders right be defended?

It seems victims always suffer – always move. We need to move the perpetrator like Australia. One tendency in Australia is judges look at whether there is a place where they can be moved to. Usually relatives used. Protection order served by police on man and police emphasize that a breach will result in immediate arrest. "On the whole it has proved to be a good deterrent."

Removal of the perpetrator raises questions of denial of natural justice because the orders in Australia are sought ex parte.

Offender needs to be taken from house; of course, we said it for 10 years

Many argue that the perpetrator should be removed from the home. This issue is fraught with legal difficulties. Some areas can enact restraining order by telephone. Within the shelter system, however, a woman has easy access to support services, information, etc. Again, individual choices for the victim should be considered. "Safety of the victims should be a primary concern." We should try to minimize risk as much as we can. There should be a very rapid assessment of the situation to avoid disruption.

It is unfair that women are encouraged to leave home to a shelter and we want to explore the options for offending men to live away from home.

Removing offender from home to keep peace and provide protections not illegal but Ontario law does provide for 50/50 ownership of home; taking man out of home assumes other than innocence until proven guilty – if women left in home, need appropriate support in community free from further violence – a long-term problem.

Sheltering Offenders Instead of Victims

There are proposals being made by men to arrange for shelters to be provided in the event that he is removed from his home (in the instance of wife/child abuse). Until he goes to court the man has to be placed in custodial atmosphere – the shelter would provide a counselling service as well as food and shelter.

Group affirmed the importance of shelter for provision of housing and services for victims and offenders; hard to persuade abusive male the best thing is for him to leave the home following crisis. Male lawyers may advise him to stay because he will look guilty if he leaves.

A shelter or something similar to a shelter be created for men as opposed to jail [aboriginal title]. Devise a place where men can get therapy, help – how would they stay there – what about anger management [aboriginal title] term is wrong, misleading.

Treatment in Corrections Institutions

Correctional service could stand a lot of service, particularly the therapy. Do not do away with incarceration but it needs change.

Jail is not rehabilitative. People want to believe that jail works and also it is sold this way by those who use it. Dead time is not a solution. Long-term jail is not acceptable.

Lack of treatment in prisons adds to continuing problem.

Continuing funding from Solicitor General for offenders in penitentiaries and other correctional facilities.

After we incarcerate abuse perpetrators, we don't provide treatment and counseling necessary. Need for treatment within institutions for batterers. Jails don't rehabilitate alone without treatment. Available and accessible.

"Turning Point" treatment programs for abusive men could design and implement resident[ial program].

Recommendations

Need:

- Treatment programs targeted toward incarcerated abusers (more counselling and counsellors).
- To ask victims for opinions regarding intervention strategies, resources and service provision.
- To intervene swiftly to remove perpetrator from home - risk factor for victim.
- Some sort of educational program for abusers before allowed back in home; in drunk driving it is sometimes effective.
- An identification program within correctional institutions to detect abusers (those incarcerated for other charges but who may have previously committed abuse).
- To find other options and seek changes to legal system to make feasible option of removing offender from own home.
- Program in penitentiary setting dealing with sexual offenders [to] be continued.
- Overhauling of probation system for offenders (allow for long-term mandatory treatment; e.g., beyond six-month probation period). Allow substantial sentences for those breaking probation, allow for probation to be in place in case of sentences longer than two years.
- To consider that men should be removed from the home and ordered to stay away – get him out temporarily and get a restraining order to keep him away from wife who is in home. If men are sent out of home, then women must have other resources to get together with other women to provide for shared expenses and breaking of the isolation. We also need to be cognizant of the women's safety.
- To explore the concept of a residential facility for abusers or potential abusers – extensions of male groups concept.
- Shelters for men who abuse; may resolve the crisis in a shorter period of time.
- Provincial legislators to amend respective property acts to recognize other than physical assault as one of criteria for granting an order for exclusive possession of the home.
- To explore models from other countries to remove violent spouse: including justice system, sentencing alternatives.
- A review of legislation and systems which will allow a man to be removed from the residence rather than the woman and children.
- The removal of the offender from the home in the situation of child sexual abuse.

Ensure:

- That when offenders are incarcerated, treatment is provided, begins promptly, and continues after release to the community.
- That the government should find new funding for men's hostels/ bail houses.

- That in age of fiscal restraint we recommend that men pay for their own treatment (court mandated).

Examine:

- Need to emphasize men leaving the situation. If a system existed then it could be done. But the remedy needs to be fast. We also need the ability to track or monitor the situation.
- Women and children staying at home with support and men brought to shelters and enrolled in treatment programs, and transition houses still maintained.
- Methods to have accused removed rather than victim including research and policy and legislation; e.g., analogy to refusal to take breathalizer with refusal to go to transition home. Disagreement on examining whether legislative changes could address this issue because code already addresses bail and the problem is enforcement not legislation.

SECTION FOUR: Alternative Response to Family Violence

One group unanimously requested that a paper prepared by J.H.C. Clarke for the Forum be included in the Proceedings Document. As Mr. Clarke, an instructor at the Atlantic Police Academy, presents a policing perspective on offender responsibility, it is reproduced here.

Alternative Response to Family Violence

J.H.C. Clarke, Instructor, Atlantic Police Academy

Women who are victimized by family violence or spouse abuse remain in the abusive situation because they are not aware of or are not able to obtain an acceptable remedy. No person who is in fear of or has suffered abuse should be forced by law, economic circumstances or geographical location to remain under the control of or in contact with the abuser.

Historically, when the victim reached the point of desperation, she called the police or attacked her aggressor in self-defence. In the first instance, she tended to be further victimized by being removed from her home to a temporary shelter with relatives or friends, then being required to lay an information and be responsible for pressing a charge through the court system. Unless there were serious injuries, the matter was usually passed sideways out of the Criminal Court to the Family Court which had, as its main objective, the restoration of the family as a unit, thus returning her to the battering situation.

The woman and her family were then forced into applying for social assistance or being dependent on the charity of friends or society. Even though the woman had laid an information, the proceedings were usually by summons, so that her abuser remained at large. He was also pretty much at liberty to harass her and exert pressure on her to withdraw the charge, a frequent result, which then reduced the likelihood that the police would take her seriously the next time she complained.

If she responded with violence, she was usually arrested and charged. People who were ignorant of the dynamics of abuse still tended to blame her, since they felt that she could have left and so save herself, rather than resort to violence.

Frequently she was deprived of her children as in either instance the spouse could claim she was not financially capable of supporting them, or was an unfit person by reason of her violent response to violence.

Institutionally, there was a great reluctance on the part of the police to "interfere" in family matters, as they happened "between husband and wife" and therefore [such matters] were more "civil" in nature than "criminal."

This did not change much until there was in place a skeleton system of shelters for abused families to which the victims were able to gain access. Even then they were often unable to get the police to take them to a shelter but had to rely on their own devices for transportation.

Eventually, due to public education, police training in the area of human relations, and pressures by many social groups, some police officers became more sensitive to the needs of victims and the resources available. Also, Ministers of Justice required the police to lay charges themselves, thereby relieving the victim of the necessity of negotiating her way through the judicial system.

There were still problems however as the choice between the first level of assault and the more serious "assault causing bodily harm" was somewhat subjective; injuries which would have caused the more serious charge when they were inflicted by a stranger were not considered that serious when inflicted by a spouse. The "bail reform" provisions for conditions to be placed upon an accused before "early release" were not used in many cases. The accused was often not barred from cohabitating with the victim and was still able to cause "witness amnesia" when the time came for trial. The rationalization for not using restrictions was usually that they were seen as "punishment" and "unwarranted restrictions on liberty" of a person who had not been convicted. Thus it was usually the victim who was told to remove herself from danger. Due to backlogs in the court system, charges frequently took months to come to trial, which permitted the "honeymoon" or "courting syndrome" of remorse to effect a "reconciliation" and defeat the process of justice.

In the event of the charge coming to trial and conviction there was no guarantee that this process would be any more successful than any other criminal conviction in causing permanent changes in behaviour. It often inflicted more hardship on the victim by loss of spousal financial support and the social stigma of "having put her husband in jail." This consideration also caused great reluctance on the part of a victim to report the matters to the police as they did not want their spouse punished but rather to change behaviour to stop the battering. Because there appeared to be no method available to the court to obtain this, many women saw no benefit in having the state intervene.

With the appearance of "Turning Point" and "Time Out" [offender treatment] programs, it seemed that there was now a chance that the behaviour could be changed as long as the abuser accepted responsibility for his actions and desired to change. These programs were organized with minimal funding and were mainly operated by concerned social workers who donated their own time and effort to try to alleviate society's problems. Unfortunately, the decision to attend this therapy usually rested with the abuser, and if he did not accept the responsibility for his actions, he was unlikely to agree that he should attend. The courts seemed to lack knowledge of the available programs and seemed loathe to make use of them.

The success rate for those who were ordered to attend seems to be better than any other form of treatment and now there are many groups running with some men returning for further treatment. The courts now are more aware of this resource and some are ordering the accused to attend as part of a probation order. Unfortunately this cannot occur until after conviction, if any, and by then the break-up of the family without treatment being commenced may have already occurred.

There is no consistency in procedure and often it is left up to the accused to attend or not. There is also no motivation to attend other than the desire of the abuser to change his ways. Given the profile of batterers characteristics, very few have reached the stage of admitting fault.

Alternative Measures

There is, however, one method by which the motivation could be increased and at the same time the suffering of the victims could be alleviated. If the abuser was removed from his position of control and placed in a situation where he could receive therapy, he would not be able to avoid any burden, and the victims could be relieved of the negative consequences of reporting the assaults.

In the past when the victim went to a shelter, she lost all that she had gained during the years of marriage, her children lost the ability to attend their regular school, she was removed from her family and friends in the community and she was forced to depend on public charity for economic support. She was placed in the position of perhaps losing custody of her children and the aggressor was left sitting pretty.

If the position was reversed, the person who committed the assault would be arrested, removed from the family residence, charged, and could be released on conditions as provided for in the Criminal Code. The main condition would be that he would reside in a single man's hostel staffed by "Turning Point" type therapists until the court decided otherwise. As this would take place before conviction, the court would be able to be advised of any positive indicators of behavioural change, and could then deal with the matter differently than if they did not have this information. Positive indicators could permit the Court to avoid using incarceration as a motivator for behavioural change.

As a result of using the "bail reform provisions" in a constructive manner, many of the previous problems would diminish or be eliminated. Not being incarcerated he could maintain his employment and move around subject to the control of the counsellors. If he was working then the court could order that he maintain his family in the normal way, including house payments or rent, and also pay some of the cost of staying in the hostel. If he was not working, but was on social assistance, it would not cost society any more than it does now. As he progressed in responsibility and showed evidence of changing his behaviour he could be allowed short visits to his family to practise re-establishing normal behaviour but return to the hostel while his charge was being processed.

The wife would not lose the material advantages she had earned and she would achieve the potential of obtaining the result that she desires of changing his behaviour without putting him in jail or causing financial hardship as the result of a pecuniary penalty. The children would not be uprooted from their school, and be less likely to perceive that they had been punished by being taken away from their accustomed environment.

At present, social services must pay the upkeep of the victim in a transition house or secondary housing, while the abusive spouse remains in a perfectly usable home alone. In addition, society pays the costs of maintaining "transition houses" and the staff necessary to support them. The abusive spouse does not become responsible for these costs; they must be borne by all other members of the taxpaying public who shoulder their share without being responsible for the problem. However, if this plan was implemented successfully the costs of the hostel would be much less than those of a home provided for a woman and her family and the psychological trauma would be reduced. In addition there would be much greater motivation for the abuser to change his behaviour in order to return to his previous comfortable existence. In P.E.I. these costs amount to about $200,000 for the house upkeep itself, plus support services, together with about $900 per month for a woman with two children (the average resident of the house), of which there are about 180 seeking shelter each year.

Eventually funding that now goes to support "transition houses" would be transferred to the "Turning Point" hostels and probably reduced due to the lesser costs involved. This brings forward a very real concern expressed by the people who are deeply involved with the transitional house system. It is that any funding directed toward them at present would be reduced by the amount needed to fund the hostels before the benefits accrued would reduce the need for the shelters. For some time there would be need for parallel systems until the behavioural changes reduced the need for victims' shelters. This problem could be avoided by using the existing network of victims' shelter associations as a medium for installing, managing and monitoring the hostel system. The people now involved in administering the "transition house" system have great experience derived from years of working under difficulties with minimal funding. In addition, many counsellors are involved in both sides of the system at the same time.

Another objection that has been raised by people concerned about civil rights, is that the accused, who has not yet been convicted of a crime, has been deprived of some of his constitutional rights by being forced out of his home (read: the place where he committed his offence). In the past, people who were charged with violent crimes were dealt with in this way and there was no outcry at that time. I feel that that was because the crimes were committed against the general public who could see themselves as being victimized again if the culprit was not restrained in some way. There are not enough wives with the public backing to influence the courts in the same way, and they therefore can be forced out of their homes, being the powerless.

A recent case in Nova Scotia shows that the courts are prepared to apply these same conditions in order to prevent persons doing violence to themselves. In this particular instance, as a result of a mental patient committing suicide while out on a day pass after being charged with attempted murder, the Attorney General strongly suggested that such people be deprived of their liberty by being confined to a mental institution until dealt with by the courts. If these conditions can be applied to prevent self-injury, it would appear to be even more important that they be applied to prevent victims being further abused, and the course of justice being perverted.

Also, where young offenders have been charged with an offence, it is seen as "extremely disruptive" to a young person, as it may result in sudden removal from familiar surroundings and placement in an often intimidating, institutional environment...will usually interfere with schooling or employment, and with familial and peer relationships. ["The Young Offender in Canada", Wall & Thompson, Toronto, 1988: 20.] Is it not even more disruptive and unfair to remove children from their home when they have committed no offence, except that of being a primary or secondary victim? Certainly, the same disruptiveness will occur.

At the moment a woman who is employed commercially out of her own home could be removed to a "transition house" for safety, which would effectively put her out of business.

When the accused is self-employed and working out of his home he could be restricted by not having contact with his family, or this might be a case for his victim to be put up at his expense in comparable surroundings. If a farmer, he can be barred from the house but permitted to work the land and the barns. In each of these cases he would return to the hostel at night to sleep and be exposed to therapy.

There is no doubt that there are some cases where this system will not work, but in the majority of instances there is no reason why the victim cannot remain free of harassment. The fact that some cases may not be appropriate is no reason for dismissing a plan wholesale. The benefits to be derived from even a partial implementation are such that it would be worthwhile.

To obtain the optimum results from a program of this nature it is necessary for all involved to practice some innovative thought processes. All concerned must be prepared to work together and look at the old problem in a new light. The police, being the first to intervene must be able to consider the plight of the victim as they would in a situation where there was no marital relationship. They will need the cooperation of the justice system, primarily those involved in the early release procedure. Justices must accept that without their consideration of the restrictions which can be placed on the accused and their application to remove the accused from access to his victims, this plan will not work. Crown counsel must lend their influence to the efforts of the police in obtaining the restrictions which will put the accused in a curative placement and may perhaps obviate the need for an expensive trial with its problematic result. Defence counsel must realise that this system may be more in the interests of their client than aiding him to escape the consequences of his actions. I see no conflict with their duty to their client, which must go further than merely testing the case against him. Judges cannot help there being delays in the court system but they can see that any delay time is utilized productively in counselling, and eventually there may be no need to visit the heavy weight of punishment on the accused if positive ends can be achieved in a different way.

SECTION FIVE: Special Needs Groups

Aboriginal Peoples

Native communities in the north call "Flying Court" Flying Circus. The First Nations have [had] a justice system of their own before white[s] imposed [a] system that is not even readily available. First Nations need self-determination in justice system. Problems with Special Constable concept – there is a public perception that they have no authority and [the concept] goes against First Nation value of not telling another person what to do. It is very important to educate the police force.

For the aboriginal peoples, the issues of racism, taking children into non-aboriginal care and the need for a self-defined judiciary system that enables communities to deal with family violence are the central themes.

Discussion Notes

Betty Osborne case in The Pas was brought up; also J.J. Harper shooting in Winnipeg. Aboriginal people of Manitoba have said "no more." The people of The Pas are now looking more closely at themselves as is the whole province.

Racism among police prevents action being taken even with native constables - the system changes them, wears them down so they can't make changes.

They are afraid to use the justice system because this is not well taken by their community.

Tribal courts; federal government is responsible for justice; justices of peace hear minor cases; RCMP have right to investigate.

The more information the woman is given, the less likely she is to withdraw charges.

Aboriginal: B.C. chooses not to use court in child abuse and wife abuse; deal and accept responsibility in community to resolve the issue. Put victim/offender together to solve the dilemma in workshop situation.

Natives don't access services because when they do, the police respond physically.

Criminal acts are criminal even in native communities which have their own systems of government within the constraints of the Canadian qualified legal system.

Children in native communities often put in white homes.

Native men get more harshly sentenced for assaulting a white man. Sometimes natives are over-sentenced and sometimes under-sentenced because of attitude that assault is accepted in native community.

Experience in some centres has been that native women are no more or less interested in pursuing criminal justice action than are non-native women; but the distinctiveness of native culture(s) and the repercussions of that distinctiveness for service delivery must be considered.

A lot of discussion about aboriginal issues and the need to empower them to take on responsibility for their communities. On reserves government had taken away the responsibilities. Indian people are scapegoats and perpetuate the criminal justice system. A lot of people make a lot of money off our suffering and from oppressing us.

Aboriginal people do not want mandatory charging. It is too easy. We are trying to encourage the justice system to refer our people to alcohol treatment centres. There they deal with issues of abuse - their own, and what they do to others. Their own history (individual) is dealt with as well. But we're not reaching the rural settings. They end up having to leave [move] to the cities because resources are not there. Women end up leaving the abusive situation. The family ends up disintegrating. We want to go back to our traditional ways and values to solve the problems. The Elders are used in the shelter and the traditional ways are used to help the women in the shelter. Correctional jails have sweat lodges for the male inmate. We are going back to our traditional ways. One aboriginal person rejects the criminal justice system for use against aboriginal people.

There can be mandatory treatments but they may not learn. We need cultural programs for the aboriginal people. We need more work on the ways to help the aboriginal communities.

Everyone is saying incarceration does not work. Can we make a strong statement to express this? We need alternatives to incarceration. Civil perhaps. There is a court challenge case about our aboriginal women and spiritual Elders in institutions. People committing crimes were removed if they did not learn. We want the community to deal with it. I do not want to be judged by one standard.

Among aboriginal people, history is that other people make the charge or report the incidents. It takes away community's ability to deal with it. We make up the bulk of the jail populations. If we pursue the model then what happens to our people there? One worker for the entire population of a prison. We should not focus so much on Theme IV but on I, II, and III.

Example of causes: aboriginal families make up large percentage in federal/provincial jails: family violence/alchohol abuse. Do we build more jails to fix this problem? What path are we taking? Not many men come in charged with family violence. What can be done prior to reintegration? We need to deal with their views. How do you identify the perpetrator? What are the precursors?

Recommendations

Need:

- To train native court workers re: violence.
- More consultation – once is not enough, also people have to listen to the constituency groups especially the native peoples.
- Alternatives to incarceration and mandatory charging.
- Tribal courts in aboriginal communities.
- Witness support programs to be culturally sensitive about aboriginal children.
- To go back to our traditional ways and values to solve the problems.
- Justice system and child protection system that meets needs of aboriginal people – probably have their own system and a culturally sensitive general system.
- Cultural sensitivity, however, for example, native women do not want charges laid. The question is increasingly being raised about whether charges further victimize the women; in individual cases this does happen.
- Education concerning the "white" judicial system.
- Criminal and family law systems to work closely together. Look at and learn from aboriginal communities. Continue looking at effect of charging policies. Look for support from community, legal, and economic point of view for victims from time of charge-laying through to evaluation of process.
- To inform people about the process with advocate.
- Aboriginal people govern themselves and we can follow their example.

Let: Aboriginal communities control their own destinies, programs and government.

Children

The dangerous lack of services with which to respond to the mandatory reporting laws, the consequences of inappropriate handling of children in the prosecution of abuse and the nature of secondary victimization of children and non-offending parents within the intervention system was the focus of the discussion.

Discussion Notes

Children are especially vulnerable to unintended negative consequences of court proceedings.

New Brunswick has a pilot project for child abuse work; mechanisms are in place for children (mandatory reporting) and a few provinces also cover disabled and elderly. Group concern that although reports of physical abuse of children have been increasing in the different provinces, physical abuse is being overshadowed by concern over sexual abuse of children. In Ontario of 2000 cases involving children 60% of apprehensions were due to physical abuse.

Neglected children – a law allows for reporting – six times more children in the protection system. Services overloaded and waiting lists. Serious cases do not receive immediate attention. Few additional resources. Question: what is the best way to protect the child? Parents that would take care of what is needed instead of foster homes. Care needed when taking legal approach – avoid adverse results – more social approach needed as therapeutic approach no longer effective. No resources available to back up the law.

Children in need of protection – not taking children away, but as a mechanism for reporting the risk to children. The wife may not wish kids taken away, but women will seek help if children threatened. Provincial variation in legislation of child protection – i.e., child witnesses in Alberta and Newfoundland only – also emotional abuse in Ontario not handled. Confirmation re: Andy's [Wachtel] paper: resources are not there re: minimum protection not assured – long-term costs high, i.e., child.

Contradiction in the system – cited sexual abuse case of a young girl by her mother – perfect example of acts not considered abusive by most mothers – game – kiss on the vulva. Mothers question whether this is a case for court action – criminal charges laid against mother. Role of social workers in reporting and evaluation.

Child protection model mandatory assessment and evaluation following report, disposition of case depends on situation; suggest similar assessment model in wife abuse cases for police.

Child victim further victimized by removal from home rather than removal of perpetrator.

Fault of child protection system that "victims" mother and children further victimized – many horror stories recounted.

Tendency of courts to worry about rights of fathers rather than being concerned with rights of children.

In child abuse, perpetrator should be brought before courts, takes time; often don't get convictions, sentence is so minimal child wonders why this was undertaken in first place.

Child Welfare Care Act: event must be connected to an individual even if evidence is present, father still may deny it – witness is required.

Discussion around child witnesses and interviewing them – many of issues are same for spousal assault and elder abuse situations; suggestion these issues be addressed in a way that does not overcomplicate the criminal system.

Children who don't want to talk or testify.

Mandatory reporting in child abuse is not helpful unless resources available to be helpful to children and system does not further abuse children either through frequent moves in foster homes, etc., or by repeating their story over and over again in the justice system. Agree with background paper on system stress – in crisis.

Mandatory reporting of child abuse is essential and reflects societal responsibility even though we are sensitive to the limited resources in the system.

In spite of strong pressures concerning mandatory reporting of instances of abuse, the group raises many important arguments against such a practice; i.e., problems encountered in the protection of youth system in Quebec.

What we have learned about child abuse can be extended to others as well.

Children and videotaping: often the father on viewing tape and hearing child's accusations will declare himself guilty; tape stays with police department in Manitoba.

Recommendations

Amend: The present system to permit child witnesses perhaps not necessarily as a legislative change, but certainly as a policy change.

Note:

- That the law of Quebec has a very wide scope. Need to increase prevention resources, to reduce the role of the justice system, and to increase the legal protection of children; resources for prevention and for the DPY (Department for the Protection of Youth).
- Look at shortening length of time for child victims between time of reporting and court appearance. Look at London Family Court Clinic model and Wendy Harvey B.C. model.
- Abuse as neglect of children – going without food, clothing, love, caring, attention.
- That children were singled out here – if assault is a crime then children should not be treated differently from adults and have their concerns dealt with out of criminal court; recognition that going through court system can be very difficult for children.

Resolve:

- That the resources required to apply effectively the current child protection laws must be provided (through federal transfer payment, provincial cost sharing, and municipal where applicable).
- That where child protection laws require strengthening and improvement to ensure that child violence of physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect, including child witnesses of parental assault, are protected effectively, these changes be put into the legislative process at each provincial level.

Hear: Children in their own language.

Need:

- More support for child witnesses; criminal justice system does not equate with child welfare, etc., not same philosophical perspective; vulnerable when provincial legislation can be challenged by federal Criminal Code.
- Systemized method to interview kids within context that does not overcomplicate system; look to others interviewing children who are qualified.
- More chances for children to be heard in court.
- A systemized method of child interviewing that leads to methods to assess statements to ensure information is valid and gathered in a manner sensitive to child's needs and those of criminal justice system.
- Certificate programs, multidiscipline education in colleges and university for child interviewers; interview of child victim: must acquaint child with criminal justice system; riverbed attitude so child will realize what is in front of them: minimize trauma; get child acquainted; doing all in context of maintaining integrity of process. Situation in this country where there are so many victims we need to follow workable models. Validity analysis was the historical base for the establishing of "kids don't lie" approach; the area is very sensitive and needs professional input to maximize the effects.
- To pay close attention to the updated research on interviewing child victims.
- More specialization education for witnessing in court for a child abuse case.
- Professionals or paraprofessionals and mothers to be acceptable as witnesses.

Disabled Persons

There: Is need for police and shelter workers to document the number of disabled victims they encounter.

The Elderly

Sensitivity, awareness and thoroughness are needed in order to intervene appropriately for victims of elder abuse. Effort is required in order to better define and investigate various kinds of abuse including institutional.

Discussion Notes

Women with dementia – and cannot articulate evidence is not as crucial as it used to be. In elder abuse, if the batterer is taken out of the house, the elder is left without care.

Aged – institutionalized – cover-ups by staff/police usually have trouble getting information and evidence has been destroyed; sexual charge one case (not so severe) one by staff/one by resident (very severely).

Mandatory reporting must be debated. Issue complicated by fact that elders may choose not to.

Who will report it? Neglect; over medication. We should be able to have some impact on future planning. Usually become more dependent upon people they know. Begin to evolve support system for those with no family. "Sandwich generation" caught between parents and children. Should old person leave care of hospital to return to no one? Homecare with support; when parents are moved to be with children, the child is the only social support.

Some persons are not autonomous, but they are not incapable. Many elderly persons can take their own responsibilities, but many are no longer autonomous. There is a program in Saint John, New Brunswick to explain the judicial process to the elderly.

Domestic violence – mainly concerned with wife/husband/child battering with wife battering more prominent; charges come before the court; not so much elder abuse, which needs more attention.

Mandatory reporting: mandatory reporting puts the elderly at great risk: they fear that they will be punished/institutionalized, exposing their failure to have properly raised their children who now abuse them. In gentle caring ways, the elderly can be assisted as they expose the abuse: places/people need to help the elderly share their story.

Recommendations

Use: Should be made of the Mental Health Act to be sure that mentally disabled elderly are not abused.

Examine:
- And debate mandatory reporting carefully before including victims of elder abuse due to human rights issues.
- The cases of the elderly that first of all require the handling of a legal problem (the taking over of clandestine nursing homes).
- Inclusion of elder abuse in definition of what is a crime.

Need: Greater support for family caregivers.

Approach: Medical profession re: over-medication; support homecare with social workers as well as nurses: cheaper than any other care and empowering to elder person.

Develop: Support system for those without family.

Ethnocultural Groups

Discussion Notes

Model in Vancouver – police have been training in cross-cultural matters. They have also designated two officers to specialize in particular ethnic groups and these officers cooperate with other agencies working with these groups. There is a two-year turnover of officers – this is seen as positive to train more.

Question that immigrant families should be made aware of Canadian lifestyle. Perhaps this should mean families coming in need to be informed of services for battered women – know about their rights. We're not making an effort to involve the immigrants in the process.

Recommendations

Need: Training for judges and prosecutors on cross cultural issues.
Witness support systems to be culturally sensitive.

Rural and Remote Communities

In remote and rural areas, it is unfeasible to have specialized personnel (e.g., a judge who handles family matters exclusively).

High level of turnover in isolated communities in professional positions causes appropriate response problems and interagency cooperation problems.

Many elements are involved in the community to protect the wife; seldom possible in rural areas as compared to urban.

Recommendations

Need: To have justice system more sensitive to communities (especially small communities).

THEME 5

Support and Treatment for Victims and Offenders

3.5 THEME 5: SUPPORT AND TREATMENT FOR VICTIMS AND OFFENDERS

In Themes I, II, and III, the issue of family violence was explored through emphasizing the need for fundamental societal change. The design and goals of prevention, education and training programs were based on the understanding that there are groups within society who have and abuse, the power and control they have over others. We have been told that we can distinguish between those who are most likely to abuse and those who are likely to be abused by determining gender, age and the degree of economic dependency and cultural self-determination. In Theme IV, the participants began to identify individual as opposed to societal needs and experiences. In Theme V, that process is continued as the needs and experiences of known victims and offenders who are sheltered, treated and encouraged to change are considered.

Section One presents material on the philosophy of intervention, intervention values and ownership, volunteerism and community responses.

Section Two explores treatment and services for women and offenders, self-help and services competing for funding.

Section Three is centred on establishing shelters, sheltering and alternatives to the mainstream sheltering model. This topic generated much material on removing offenders from the family home instead of victims and the need for mandatory residential treatment in addition to treatment within correctional institutions. Those notes are included in Theme IV, Section Four (p.186).

Section Four focuses on lobbying, research and government.

Section Five contains the material on the special needs groups: aboriginal peoples, ethnocultural groups, the elderly, children, disabled persons and rural and remote communities.

SECTION ONE: Intervention

"In intervention, we cannot choose only one door. We must go through all the windows."

"We would like to see a budget equivalent to that of National Defence created for the defence of women and children."

The discussion notes and recommendations for this section centre on the philosophy of intervention, examining intervention values, ownership, competition for funds, volunteerism and community responses.

Discussion Notes

Philosophy of Intervention

Happy to note our coming together. Our challenge is to try to work together more. Confronting ideas means taking risks. We must have the courage to admit our differences in order to identify our common points of reference. Sitting down to work together and to discuss ideologies.

A participant noted the importance of non-violent discussions during the difficult consultation process on this most sensitive of subject matters.

"Any intervention must be healing."

Time men individually took responsibility for education and changing of other men.

To be coherent in our interventions, we must find the means from within the family's role. It (the family) is politically founded on a dominating/dominated basis.

Spirituality needs emphasis (over religion). We develop physical and intellectual parts and forget spiritual development.

Can't put a time limit on forgiveness – each resolves it at own speed.

Until we can create notion of community, almost impossible to reach any healing.

There needs to be development. A national focus for development is needed.

The issue is not new. This is the fifth conference on the subject this year. "We know what the issue is. We need to act on the solutions."

One idea expressed was that maybe if vulnerable people (women and children) all had more "self defence" training they would feel more powerful and gain more self-confidence and positive self-image. Another thought: using violence against violence is just perpetrating violence.

One member said we must be careful not to just empower one side of the population without preparing the other side of the population; sometimes women in the pursuit of power simply adopt the male power structure – or resort to weapons to equalize the power.

Examining Values

"The real issue is equality and the power of any individual to choose."

Therapeutic interventions – imposing values is dangerous; i.e., choices should be given to client where applicable.

[Reflect] over [our] professional biases and how they might impact [on treatment].

Mostly attended by social workers, judges and lawyers never present; don't know how to get at and through to judges and lawyers.

Consider allowing individuals to label themselves rather than imposing label on them by biased professional.

"Unfortunately everything boils down to money."

Border Disputes

Important to make resources available for men who commit assault. Perhaps solutions. I am ill at ease with polarization – work hand in hand.

Service organizations are often better at serving [them]selves than serving clients; often have all services but not necessarily working together – fragmentation.

Institutions are now starting to respond. The right to access treatment [for example]; the question also has to deal with standards.

Divisiveness among agencies and workers – "ownership problem."

Volunteerism

Shouldn't utilize volunteers to carry backbone of programs, want very best professionals. Volunteers are fine to enhance program; nervous when government talks of volunteers. Wonder if intent is for government to retreat from obligations to provide services and rely on benevolent society (women, unpaid) to donate their time. Expertise should be recognized and compensated. Fewer and fewer volunteers available in reality. Volunteers don't get appropriate credit, yet underfunded shelters use volunteers who are not recognized as professionals. Volunteers seen as cheap labour.

Volunteers cannot offer basic services (30 around the house).

"Yes, we need volunteer involvement but not at the expense of programming or funding of programs."

Volunteerism is useful but not a solution to the need of resources.

Use of volunteers should not be an excuse for not funding adequately – even volunteers need some reimbursement; volunteers need training and coordination; volunteers provide some ownership for community.

Volunteers are fine, but as they already perform a lot of work, we cannot ask them to do more.

We need to find new ways to use existing volunteers.

Community Responses

Don't confine healing to victim, perpetrator or family but whole community: need treatment, education, prevention, attitude change, caring.

Community must be a safe place for victim.

Community-based involvement – or not enough support: involve grass-roots; ask for it; community meetings; parenting, information and referral and education and wife abuse subcommittees.

Recommendations

Note:

- That volunteers have: a high participation of women in the workplace; high proportion of women who are single parents; cannot be expected to deliver basic services (not enough supply); government should not put emphasis on volunteers.
- That shelters are being asked to meet needs in community for which they are underresourced and not trained. They never intended to meet all these divergent needs yet are requested to because they are the most accessible service for difficult-to-serve clients.
- Community responsibility for individualism, too.
- That it is important for professionals to recognize their own values and biases toward victims and offenders, attempt not to impose a personal ideology, and respect the values and cultural norms of families within the limits of Canadian law.
- That each community needs assessment to identify services.
- That offender and offended should be treated ideally in the community: culturally sensitive.
- That community model needs to be made a reality, especially with emphasis on strengthening direct service and with significant input from front-line workers and users [of service].

Provide:

- Funding so as to enable community development whereby the communities can develop their community specific programs on public awareness, prevention, treatment, etc., using a model similar to Secretary of State's current funding for women's initiatives.

- We must have the courage to admit our differences to establish our common points of reference. Sit down to work together and to discuss ideologies.

- We need to have healing interventions.

SECTION TWO: Treatment and Services

A major concern regarding the treatment and support for victims was the lack of contact between men's and women's services with the consequence being that the safety of women is not being jointly supervised and ensured while the man is in treatment. As well, it is difficult to have holistic treatment practices validated.

The treatment and service needs of offenders preoccupied the groups' attention and the need for a continuum of treatment models founded upon the necessity to have men take responsibility for their behaviour in order to achieve the goal of real behavioural and attitudinal change. Accountability to women of men's services is as major a concern as was the need for a feminist intervention strategy and more treatment programs. The importance of conducting meaningful evaluation research on the effectiveness of such programming was emphasized and, in general, it was concluded that in a group setting, treatment does work.

Self-help as a treatment model was praised as a means through which victims and offenders can heal themselves. A partnership between professional and self-help methods was suggested.

The importance of services working together, either formally through coordinating committees, or informally through regular contact, was judged as an important way in which communities can meet the needs of victims and offenders.

Discussion Notes

For Women Who Are Battered

Quebec's Centre for Women – a resource not mentioned in L. McLeod's document or anywhere else (75 come to the aid of 150,000 women annually). Transition houses and male aggressors already taken care of. Many women are silent victims. Many are not prepared to leave the home. In Quebec, centres for women are an important place for interventions. They receive without being labeled: solitude – need to talk – educational activities (autonomy, mental health can cause disclosure). Support work is done upon entry into transition home and afterwards in retraining their life – they become confident. This takes place throughout Canada (30 in British Columbia). Place important. Prevention, detection, follow-up, listening and consciousness-raising.

Social assistance – transfer payments from federal to provincial will have a major effect on funds; battered women are tied to government policies related to federal and provincial; concern as federal funds dry up – provincial funds will be used up; provinces make the first commitment, therefore, federal funding will never dry up in this area.

Victims often concerned that they themselves will become offenders.

Abused women and their use of tranquillizers; problem with medical profession.

Cultural role models and teaching are what make women and men different.

Critical that battered women have contact with women's group [when partner is in treatment for battering].

Holistic approach – if sexual, etc., abuse identified, accompanied by drug and alcohol abuse; begin from point that treatment has to follow from societal view. Prevention and treatment have to go hand in hand. Whole person has to be dealt with. Great deal more can be done to heal victim than to heal perpetrator; believe that people can be healed.

Adult survivors of sexual assault are not being serviced adequately – not really expensive services needed but more support [needed] for them and their services. Where do they fit in overall strategy?

Basic principle: the treatment of violence must not be analyzed outside its social and political context. A social-political framework with a "feminist" ideology is required (not to be restricted only to individuals). Violence must be tackled as a whole. There must be massive detection, no matter if victim addresses the system directly or indirectly. The existence of violence is known, it has been analyzed, now let us find the best means of intervention. Validate present knowledge and share it to better respond to needs.

It is easier to identify cases involved in the judicial process (the categories of abuse are more easily identified); types of appropriate intervention and their results.

What about women who want to stay with husbands? Men not put in jail. They have to make informed choices – choice re: treatment program is not necessarily good because of problems with treatment programs that "cure" without making any real change.

If we are going to have programs for men who batter them, we need programs for these women [in trouble]. Women in conflict with the law need help. Once we've intervened, it is not enough. We need follow-up. No second-stage housing, etc.

Women don't work in hierarchical structures; we don't know how this information will be shaped and massaged to be useful.

Traditional model – makes the victim feel guilty (psychiatric) – feminist approach – address the victim's needs.

Women tend to stay in violent situations because they are fearful of the options – loneliness, no support, managing on their own.

Society's view is that she likes it, deserves it; the man tells her that she is a bad mother, wife and housekeeper.

Persons in jail (males) often receive better programs than victims (women) in society.

Important that shelters provide support services and counselling but not only place where this should be available; type of counseling very important. Traditional systems of counselling don't work well for women. Culturally sensitive and feminist counseling important for women.

For Men Who Batter: Approaches

A choice of approaches is important when dealing with violent spouses: links must be made between social and intra-psychological variables. Family produces violence = produces trauma. Note the real problems experienced by female victims when the approach contradicts that of the victim. There must be a sharing of approaches involving violent spouses. We must take a "feminist" view that men are the violent ones – in order to better approach the problem.

The victim must be distinguished from the aggressor; we can agree on the social analysis of violence, but there is a problem concerning the approach: male groups agree that there is a spectrum surrounding our approach towards violent men. The feminist approach model should also take into account the entire spectrum that surrounds this approach as well.

Whole range of models needed for treatment – have to be chosen by offender.

Men have to nurture each other the way women do.

Two things: – rehabilitation of men who batter/rehabilitation of sex abuses (male) > not much success.

Comment that anger management does work; self-help, too – reduces in his [participant's] experience the recidivism rate.

Note daycare experience where kids learn violence/anger, inappropriate behaviour.

Don't think abusive men are sick; don't believe in enforced psychiatry; don't believe in funding for men's programs; believe men's programs should exist.

"Treatment" implies clinical process and disease roots; gender issue/roles and values/attitudes most important part of consciousness-raising for men to make important connections.

Counselling aspect is real key – not just incarceration of abuser; need to tap into services to address abuser's problems – factors precipitating abuse; majority of abusers not willing to admit abuse is wrong.

You can't get out of therapeutic model unless you get into a political model.

Past abuse or present abuse of men is not excuse for abusing their women/children.

How can we assess the effectiveness of treatment programs – inappropriate in the context of forum because we don't have the information about the programs.

Many areas of the country do not have services. This should be a recommendation. "These men are victims as well, though not in the same way." Agreed there is a need to bring the men's groups together to network and work on training needs.

The programs should be delivered from the feminist perspective. Mandatory treatment is required. Most provinces have lists a mile long for male treatment programs. We need male community residences to help them. Programs should be evaluated. The men's groups need to get together. They have been in place 10 years and they have not met to exchange ideas and programs.

Vast majority of men in men's groups are lower income earners. This could be because the higher income earners go elsewhere because they can afford it.

We must remember that offenders are a part of the family. There are two views or groups position: incarceration for all versus reality of victims which cry out for treatment programs. A real worry is the unrealistic expectations of the wives whose husbands are undergoing treatment. Treatment is not magic, it is a relearning process. Some feel that there should be escalating consequences for repeated abusers and not only through incarceration. It is important for women to be aware of the realities associated with the perpetrator's treatment. Mental treatment processes require a long period of time. Sometimes men who breach treatment contract are not reprimanded by the courts, legal system. There are ambiguities in the definition of successful treatment. Success is difficult to evaluate. One member brought up example: "How do you train someone to be a leader?" There are different strategies for this - no standardized program to be accredited as a men's violence counselor. We need to have research in the area – we may need to include various aspects or definitions of success.

Need for all men to go through a "consciousness-raising" process.

Perpetrators are not a homogeneous group. Their needs are multi-faceted and the research is not there to determine the scope of their needs. Programs need to meet their needs.

One participant said "There are basic characteristics that can be made about them: need to control; inability to express anger, etc." We know enough now. Could try bringing men's groups together to learn more.

Special needs services not in place to deal with problems, so repeats.

It is suggested that the word "therapy" should be banned and be replaced by the approach towards men or by the expression "treatment program" (privileged approach). It would be advisable to study, test and assess the different existing models. This approach is useful provided that it is not seen as a panacea; method of coercion followed by psycho-social approach and not as an alternative.

At present there is a 2:3 "success" rate for offenders in wife assault after treatment (definition of success is subjective – it can mean either no further violence or no injurious assaults or a decrease in assaults); question raised – when physical abuse decreases, do other forms of abuse increase, such as verbal aggression – no evidence to date, though verbal abuse is last to go; question about what to do about incorrigible offender – no answer.

For sex offenses not enough is known about treatment, not enough resources – incarceration only answer (strong opinion by individual).

Is there a model that falls in between charges and referrals? Perhaps approach as with an AA philosophy where men realize inevitable destructiveness of behaviour. Also need consequences if perpetrator does not proceed with treatment. Perhaps something similar to Employee Assistance Programs.

Our image of offenders is often negative.

Offender-based treatment efforts need to be made an integrated part of response system.

Not all sex offenders are pedophiles – some perpetrators of violence are willing to undergo treatment voluntarily.

Community-based intervention should be used for treatment of offenders realizing that incarceration may still be necessary for protection.

Offender treatment in area of sexual abuse: design programs to promote treatment, money in area for short-term treatment programs.

Point was made about anger management and conflict resolution not being appropriate interventions in men's programming – must address value and attitude changes. Concern raised re: the use the programs are to older men – not meeting their needs.

Intervention models must have treatment programs for perpetrators.

Sometimes professionals treat abusers using outdated methods.

Is wife battering an illness? [treatment] outside [the family means] battering is punished. [Treatment] in the family [enables] it [to be] healing. If victim says she would like husband to have treatment, husband may need alcohol, drug, and anger treatment separately from the wife, but joint should also be considered. A healing orientation instead of a punitive treatment should be initiated.

The creation of waiting lists is, regrettably, often necessary in order to expand available services.

To separate the offender and treatment of the offender from viewing the family as "dysfunctional"; hazard of using large term "family violence."

Traditional ways not helpful in treatment/assessment of family violence.

10 male battering programs are being evaluated in Ontario by the Women's Directorate; Quebec also examining male batterer programs.

Minneapolis DAP group recommend husband and wife be apart during treatment. This option creates difficulty about where they live. Perhaps thought should be given to this model with option for a specific place for men to live during course of treatment (cheaper than incarceration; lets him retain employment and access to children while respecting restraining order).

Negative reinforcement changes behaviour not attitudes.

Agree with separating behaviour from person; there are offenders where treatment is not effective (kids and women are still at risk); not all can be treated.

Interest in context of what federal government did (not who the people were, but were drinking and driving); conduct is socially unacceptable as in smoking: "you're not a bad person but you have a bad habit."

There are four levels from affectionate to enraged (enraged should be put away for life).

Strategies have to be different about range of thinking/feeling of these people.

Had problem with this [having no sympathy for the aggressor] because victim can also become an abuser (mother hitting her child); we have to separate "bad" behaviour from "bad people," which never happens in correctional system. Lack of sympathy is most dangerous aspect and can lead to lack of self-esteem, depression and suicide or self-mutilation because abuser sees himself/herself as an evil person.

Punitive is not the only answer; group therapy for those who batter seems to be answer – no money to assess the effects of therapy.

The offender is accountable; the victim is not responsible for the offender's behaviour.

How can we respond to the long waiting list?

Accountability

Dialogue on therapy group: do not protect the victims; can they be successful in spite of being mandatory? Their efficiency must be assessed; they must not serve as a substitute for judicial process.

Concerns for programming for men: anger management, stress reduction, impulse control foci to men's programming "does not work." Skills deficit is not the issue. Financing, and program design and development should be responsible and accountable to feminist organizations, since the crucial component of men's treatment programs needs to be formed by our primary goal: to end violence against women. That takes a long-range community development focus, which affects values and attitudes. We need to continue to organize women to create crisis in men's lives. Another perspective expressed was that accountability needs to be "to women's groups" since "I have trouble with the term feminist."

Safety/protection of the victims are the primary concern of all services.

Accountability of men's groups is the issue: "Offender groups must be accountable to battered women's services."

From a victim's point of view (women and children), if treatment is available, they are more inclined to use justice system. Yes, offender treatment programs are important.

Treatment groups for male aggressors. Many groups lack any relationship with a transition home. Prerequisite for treatment. Also program assessment: 12-13 weeks too short (one to two required). Cost sharing with women's resources.

Men have to take responsibility for other men and their actions; have to involve men in process of healing - there to help not to take over. Men are not the enemy, therefore, men take responsibility for men; men have to teach men nurturing; look to new feminist theory.

Treatment for batterers is misleading because women are lead to believe the program will "fix" or "cure" the man, when it doesn't always work. Women who believe this are often put into a less safe position and it's more dangerous. Just because the batterer is in the program the women may not be safe.

Note policy that says a batterer treatment program shouldn't be in place unless there's a shelter in place for women.

Work in Quebec with counselling offered via social services. CLSC recently made counselling services available, but more communication with shelters is required. Shelters support and work closely with programs aiding violent spouses.

Traditional treatment doesn't usually work for wife abuse (e.g., regular marriage counselling where power element exists) need to go back to women victims and see if violence has stopped.

Self-help

Some of best models are self-help models – don't have to be experts to heal each other.

Self-help groups for men to deal with their victimization.

Self-help useful for all kinds of abuse and both offenders and victims.

"I've heard some people say self-help was more helpful than professional intervention."

"If we could enable people to function, better than word empowerment because power suggests aggression."

Cost-sharing for unincorporated self-help/mutual aid groups.

Funding Competition

Women's groups have been doing work for nothing – don't want to see men's groups and programs getting instant funding.

Concern was expressed that distribution of funding is very different from region to region and province to province, sometimes pitting shelters against each other to gain funding.

One group expressed concern that we are always asking for "more" and this overwhelms government; we need to spend more time strategizing on how to get things moving with what we have.

Recommendations

For Women Who Are Battered

Need:

- To continue funding for transition homes supplemented by support for and by community-based programs in advocacy, treatment, support for children, male offenders, survivors as well as ongoing counselling services.
- To address the problem of worker turnover.
- Store-front integrated advocacy centres, rural outreach programs, i.e, Renfrew County, Haliburton, in Ontario, Northern Manitoba.
- To recognize victim's needs without it being offender bashing.
- Cost-sharing (federal-provincial) for treatment services.
- Service to be non-judgmental.
- Healing treatment services to be legitimized.
- For victim to move from being victim to survivor.
- Social service systems to be refined to provide for the needs of abused women, both adequate funds and speedy service.
- Services for victims as a first priority. This is understood but the men's groups do not have their programs fully worked out. Very little training for them. There is no networking. "The bottom line is dollars." We expect the spring announcement will not be much different.
- To discuss the general economic system that keeps women poor - the economic factor: 70% of women presenting at transition homes are below poverty level; poverty and economic issues are the bottom line.
- More treatment programs for victims.
- To look at treatment (availability and accessibility).
- To pay attention to what women want to do. They have lived abuse. Once a woman makes a decision to end relationship, don't influence otherwise.

Note:

- Emergency response not adequate – not enough, not fast enough.
- Opinion that we don't want to see two/three streams of activity (e.g., rape/transition/women's centres) being multi-purpose (note these aren't necessarily open to all women; i.e., disabled, native, ethnic etc); opening in Manitoba of native women's shelter.

For Men Who Batter

Need:

- To look at alternatives [treating the family] (e.g., counselling with women and men (and [for example] recently added children's programs in Manitoba, which already have a waiting list [indicating interest]).
- To provide support and help to confront what they are doing. They need to take responsibility for what they are doing.

- "To continue support for transition homes as well as funding for community-based programs in advocacy, treatment, support and ongoing counseling for children, survivors, male offenders."
- The public to accept services punitive and rehabilitative responses to this problem.
- To go further getting help from mental health.
- Priority must be given to the psycho-social approach.
- Men's programs to continue to address women's safety issues and power and control issues.
- Programs for those who batter to maintain links with shelter programs.
- All men's treatment programs to have contact with abused women partners to: address issues of safety, protection and treatment/support; to be interviewed in the assessment of his violence; to have ongoing contact with the program; to be informed of his attendance and progress; and to give information to the program as to his abusive behaviour.
- To stipulate in proposals, that men's treatment will only be done where there are victims' services so victim services come first before treatment programs.
- Continued emphasis on demonstration projects.
- Increased commitment to evaluation of existing treatment programs and making these available.
- Treatment models that are a group model as opposed to an individual model and that these programs be continuously evaluated (modified at every cycle, i.e., for each new group entering).
- To make sure that territorial offenders be included in such [offender treatment] programs.

Ensure: Women and children have the chance to be heard by services.

Self-help

Note:

- That for self-help to work, individual has to want to get out of the situation.
- The suggestion of a form of marriage between systems (e.g., self-help and professional).
- That a professional might be useful to keep group healthy.
- That individuals should condition their own attitudes according to philosophy, any abusive past, or beliefs.

Provide: Training of professionals around working with self-help groups re: university curriculum.

Promote: Value of self-help groups without placing a too heavy onus.

Coordination

Funds: Must be made available for shelter networking (conferences, etc.).

Note:

- That transition houses must be accessible on a universal basis, the same as health care.
- That we need to work together: treatment by professionals, self-help, group assistance.
- That we need a comprehensive working relationship.
- That the national strategy should include the promotion and support of a network of supportive services adequate to the needs of women, men and children.
- That coordination of community services and networking among services in the community should be encouraged and supported.
- That counselling for men, women and children should be available without long waiting lists, and readily accessible.
- That neither men's nor women's service should be isolated – both victims and offenders need recovery services and these services can help one another.
- That we need to support the existing services properly before we can build effective networks. The foundations need to be strengthened.
- That definition and treatment are most effective through interdisciplinary approach.
- The need for federal support for local programs.
- That the federal government should emphasize that they are not responsible for social services; i.e., not mandated for service delivery. It is the media that is perpetuating this.
- That transition houses need additional funding for drop-in and follow-up services, and more funding for outreach, counselling, public education components. Hostel accommodation is necessary but not sufficient service.
- That "We can't stress enough that we have no follow-up services. No long-term follow-up after the transition home. We need second-stage housing."
- The need for funding programs for follow-up treatment.
- The need for formalized follow-up – want support when needed.

Funding Competition

Provide:

- Adequate funding to be made available to community programs for men so that these programs are not in competition or take away funds from women's programs.
- Permanent dollars.
- Commitment to equalization in social issues across Canada.

Fund: So that adequate programs are provided for young offenders and youth which are sensitive to this age group.

Give:

- Priority for funding for the services.
- Funding for shelters safety first.

- Continuity of funding over several years (five to ten) to prevent programs falling apart.

Note:

- That men's programs should not be funded in competition with women's programs.
- That funds come from different ministries so as not to jeopardize [women's funding]; in men's and women's program there will be competition for funds; workers have a responsibility to make sure that this does not happen.
- That salaries and working conditions of front-line workers should be equivalent to those of the military.

SECTION THREE: Sheltering

The topic of sheltering focused on the needs and experiences of shelters for women. While woman-centred shelters need more stable block funding and a broadening of services, they cannot meet every woman's needs nor shoulder all responsibility for ending violence against women.

Discussion Notes

Establishing Shelters

How do we address negative response of neighbourhoods to establishment of transition shelters? Ask community member and leaders to join the cause, continuing lobbying and education efforts.

Homes need the support of the communities. They need reassurance that the homes are okay. Authorities need to speak on their behalf. It should not only be the group that is forced to speak up. It is often a battle to sell it to the neighbourhood.

Sheltering

In the matter of shelter strategy, the government should determine which (strategies) are relevant. Evidently, shelters are necessary.

Insufficient number of shelters: many women refused admittance (100-150 annually in the Outaouais, three to six in Montreal every day), the same occurs in New Brunswick. Shelters are small houses sheltering between eight to sixteen persons. Because of this, follow-up is impossible. The quality of the services is too limited – due to insufficient funds.

Almost all Quebec shelters (90 per cent) function under the management of an on-site multidisciplinary committee which provides all the immediately required services, but please take note that such shelters are not "divorce manufactures."

Concern re: victim's lack of privacy – aren't able to lock their doors due to fire regulations; theft [in shelters] partly due to physical design problems – people from outside [of the resident's room] can come and go [because the] doors are unlocked [for fire safety].

Can't pre-determine length of time needed in shelter.

Shelters are for now the best solution for poor women, women with problems of access but are not a good solution for native women or rural women; shelter is a good political centre for making women aware, also a secure, women only space. Women meet other women in shelters, know they aren't alone. Visit to shelter first time they come into contact with these ideas. Women though, should have the choice; shelters aren't good for all women in all situations, not a blanket. See shelter as place of safety – if women were safe in their own homes, we could have a different process of program/service delivery.

Quebec is developing services to help women who do not need shelter.

Initial sheltering lacking prior to second stage; e.g., 24-hour telephone counselling. In Alberta, such services for children are linked to Parents Anonymous (three-day sheltering). Legal advice, accompanying services (to court, to police, to their home).

There have been a number of homicides in shelters – safety factor is paramount. Same thing for group home worker who was killed by adolescents in care.

Alternatives to Sheltering *(see also "Removing Offender" Theme 4)*

Important to note that discussing shelters at all presupposes that they are solutions to problem (whether or not in victim's community).

On the other hand, shelters are necessary (not perfect, but for the time being they answer needs in time of crisis). Should consider having at least one in every neighbourhood.

Most shelters won't accept women with substance abuse problems so other forms of shelter have to be organized which provide treatment for such addictions; something for women offenders as they come out of prison and have not resolved their problems of alcohol or drug abuse; program called "Wishes Free" based in New York for ex-prostitutes.

Shelters are not best solution for everyone. Of course not. Other solutions needed.

We've talked about alternatives already. Shelters are underfunded, understaffed and problems of burnout are not dealt with. The problem is funding.

"Shelters are a Band-Aid solution – other services are also needed."

Are shelters the best solution for everyone? Per diem funding makes it imperative to maintain a full house rather than be innovative.

Recommendations

Enable:

- Persons or groups interested in establishing shelters to have made available to them advice/expertise and support of professionals in the area of family violence.
- Funding to be more flexible for the needs of the community: shelters are not the best for all communities.
- Transition houses to be operated with a community board of directors – should be autonomous from funders.

Note:

- Concern strongly expressed that women should not have to pay individually for use of shelters.
- That shelters are being asked to meet needs in community for which they are underresourced and not trained. They never intended to meet all these divergent needs yet are requested to because they are the most accessible service for difficult-to-serve clients.
- That an adequate base funding is required for transition houses.
- That we need a holistic approach to shelters.
- That we need funding for more shelters, second-stage shelters and support services.
- Danger in blending child abuse, wife abuse and elder abuse: we need to separate these issues when looking at sheltering.
- That shelters are absolutely necessary – police can't keep husband away, they offer a sense of protection and physical function of safety.
- That we do not need to look so much to alternatives to shelters but to build on what exists – validate the usefulness of the shelters and work to fill in the gaps. Women's Resource Centre must be brought back as necessary support centres; existing services must be acknowledged and validated and funded adequately. They are where community development and networking can and should begin. Concern expressed re: how to build in community approach to a more urban setting.

Need:

- For follow-up programs (community-based) to address persons who leave shelters for other options.
- A national association of transition houses.
- Money for essential programs to be delivered 24 hours a day by trained, paid staff: two staff per shift, adequate staff rations/salaries, follow-up services, out reach, court-support programs, children's programs, public education, advocacy programs, services that are sensitive to: disabled women, older women, prostitutes, women with alcohol and/or drug problems.
- Babysitting service for evening as a support service, receiving home to look after need of single parents for respite care. In Kingston: Community Support Program funded by all three levels of government for consultation.
- To examine and promote other ways of living/housing options other than just in a family context – alternative supports other than families – keeping people in their own homes is not always the best option or the ideal.
- To address a variety of new alternatives and build up areas where none exist.

- A safe, secure place for victims (battered women and children).
- To consider alternatives but reject safe houses which offer bed only – these are not always safe – plus they lack support for long-term (housing, financial assistance, etc.) and counselling.

Encourage:
- The government to consider sheltering children whose mothers have to be reported.
- More community-based walk-in service to be set up from women's shelter to provide counselling services.

Provide:
- Funding for collaboration with detoxification centres to enable addicted women to receive help to a point where they can become acceptable to shelters; e.g., Winnipeg Post Treatment Programs.
- Support and development services for untrained workers who help with drug and alcohol problems.

Support: Family resource centres: individual and group counseling, community education, parenting classes, practical life skills.

SECTION FOUR

Ways in which to lobby for change begin this section, followed by research. Research needs include evaluations of offender treatment programs, studies on the needs of rural and remote women, security in shelters, formative research methodologies, and the dissemination of research from Quebec and other regions nationally.

Both federal and provincial/territorial governments are asked to recognize how desperately underresourced front-line services are and to "cut through the minimizations and denial of the significance of this epidemic [of violence]." The Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) was urged to provide operational funds to meet specific regional needs.

Discussion Notes

Lobbying

Sometimes "kick wrong cat" when knocking levels and departments of government – make sure you know who you are kicking. Professionals can help process right department – use bureaucratic language; better mechanisms – don't spend energy doing things other than provide services. Generate pressure re: services "squeaky wheel": rational persuasion [does] not always work; responsibility on part of person being lobbied to redirect letters etc to right dept. Government should acknowledge lobby letters even [if they] don't respond at that time; provinces often play games re:

funding – try to get more than 50% dollars. Can't sit around and wait for powers that be to fund - can loan staff between agencies, etc. Both government departments and community agencies are overburdened. Government has priority on issues too. Use opposition in lobbying too – could be next government. Bureaucracy access to information and networking; issue – the most vulnerable people in society don't have time, energy, etc., to go and lobby. So cynical that we don't expect to get action. Need to have belief that we will succeed. Broaden base of community organization: often too closed a group. Set expectations around corporate members – sit on boards. Local political action important. Ad hoc coalitions; coordinated effort from all service providers re: treatment for sexual abuse.

Policymaking done in many ways: participants welcome to contact departments individually to provide advice and submit ideas. All such interventions very welcome.

Mass demonstrations when women and children are killed to condemn violence as a whole.

Politicians do not like to lose constituency. One suggested we need to frame our anger differently; we need to be interventionist; we need to intervene to do something. Blame has been used. That's all right because our women and children are often blamed. We need to frame it in works that cannot be dismissed.

Research

Less than 1% of health grants spent on research - no longitudinal studies funded: birth to middle age. We are researching only at the stage of the problem instead of figuring out what is "wellness" or "normal," etc. Are the values, etc., being put forward in school system, society, etc., going to lead us to "wellness" or "non-violent [behaviours and values]"? Research needs also to be accountable to the community.

Question whether there should be a funded body to research this area; wife assault, family violence at national level. We don't need another bureaucratic structure. Each province needs to do work in the area.

They discussed what is going on in Quebec and how nobody knows about it because of the lack of dissemination of this information. It applies across the country.

We really don't need more studies. The recommendations already there need to be operationalized!

The research is there. We need access to it.

Funding depends on evaluation of services – fact of life.

Research of parental abilities should be made – at the detection level to determine what can be done. One participant stated that we are past the detection stage. We must protect the victims. Women are still being refused admittance to shelters – lack of room – serious lack of shelters for immigrant women.

Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation

CMHC loopholes: public doesn't know what is not there. Misconception on part of the public on this whole issue: government should be telling the whole story from front-line service providers. General public is tired of listening to [issue of] wife assault.

CMHC operating funds are a problem; funds are limited at the federal level. National debt has become a priority, therefore will have to turn to corporate sector and private sector.

Progress report: information available on CMHC project to see how much money has been used after two years.

Information in shelters is imperative.

Project Haven criteria be made more flexible to meet specific regional need such as operational funds.

Recommendations

Research

Need:

- Evaluation research of treatment programs; i.e., both forensic units, community programs, etc.
- Long-term prevalence studies of treatment programs over periods of times and their results.
- Evaluation of programs for aggressors.
- Treatment program evaluation and research re: effectiveness/evaluation long-term and longitudinal, qualitative research.
- A networking system in the area of family violence.
- Additional research for: role of shelters; who uses [them] and why; alternatives; examine user satisfaction.
- Research for options for women in rural and isolated communities.
- To research security in shelters.
- To have funds made available in addition to regular budget for formative evaluations (versus summative evaluation). Formative evaluation looks at which process is most beneficial and provides argument for why and how program should be enriched and expanded, not cut. Formative evaluations more expensive but negligent not to recommend its adoption.

Government

Need: To give priority to consulting with those at the fore-front.

Note:

- That the federal and provincial government must work closer together.
- Concern expressed that fall 1989 consultations with provinces would be held

primarily at bureaucratic level. It is requested that these be organized in such a way as to ensure that the federal and provincial governments hear from the grass-roots level where expertise is found. These people are in a position to provide appropriate relevant advice and recommendations; the need to ensure inclusions of ethnocultural groups, as well as men and youth in development of strategy was also underlined; voluntary and community groups be part of consultations.

Encourage:

- The federal government to provide funding to communities to study other alternatives. Where no other alternatives, support those existing with counselling, support services, childcare, respite care.
- Governments throughout the country to ensure the existence of all components of the community model (as specified in the [Theme I and II work]).
- The federal government to realize how desperately underresourced the front-line service response is. The federal and provincial governments must take action to ensure optimum effectiveness of resources. The governments must recognize the import of the issue and display the political will to seriously act against violence against women and children.
- Government at all levels to cut through the minimizations and denial of the significance of this epidemic.

SECTION FIVE: Special Needs Groups

Aboriginal Peoples

Treatment and sheltering on and off reserves must be established, supported and defined by aboriginal communities to promote the "circle of healing." Treatment for substance abuse must be tied to violence intervention and aboriginal children should no longer be placed in white foster homes.

Discussion Notes

Treatment and Services

There can be mandatory treatments but they [offenders] may not [necessarily] learn. We need cultural programs for the aboriginal people. We need more work for the ways to help aboriginal communities.

Native people have some valuable different approaches to services in family violence. We need to stop and really listen to what aboriginal people have to say. For native communities, there is a willingness to put the good of the community above those of any one individual. Both women and men have positions of power as Elders and leaders. Valuing women as the givers of life and community helpers is positive. The native value given to spirituality which includes respect, connectedness, sharing may well be useful to all.

Indian Act – first re: discrimination against women.

Cultural needs must be incorporated in the services. Programs need to recruit native people. Saying there are not qualified native people is not true and is unacceptable to the aboriginal people.

The point about qualified natives was supported and examples given of where they are not being hired, though qualified.

B.C. is building another jail. Existing jails already hold a lot of aboriginal people and there are no programs for them. They need access to treatment. There is no recognition of our traditional Elders who are healers in the institutional setting. We do not use the aboriginal women Elders in the institutions which are patriarchal in structure. The women [should] have equal if not a greater role of healing in the institutions. The programs should assess themselves and review their cultural programs.

Aboriginal communities compete for very scarce resources. Too many do not receive the funding required. Services are very limited. We do not put our money in community-based options.

Native point of view – people who leave their communities to get treatment – it doesn't succeed [substance abuse treatment]; natives have to develop their own programs.

Culturally appropriate services particularly for aboriginal people.

Natives: because some people have an alcohol problem we need largely to solve alcohol problem before dealing with violence issues; 100% of natives affected by alcohol and by sexual abuse (directly or indirectly).

Sheltering

Manitoba has had to move to unique native transition homes and it has been very successful. We are considering unique native crisis lines. Native women (urban) are not using mainstream services. When it is native then they use it. Cities and reserves both need the services. The reserves are even more problematic. The reserves do not have the institutions and services.

Indian communities would like to have them [shelters] but for jurisdictional reasons cannot get them. New Brunswick area shelters do not help native women at all. Problems of not understanding the culture. They do not feel supported. They need their own services. Native women having to leave home and travel long distances is a problem.

Aboriginal people need no more of their children in care. We do not want that. If that is what existing services mean then we do not want it. The ones we have lack funding. They are short term with no follow-up in area they came from which is isolated. We need the community healing. The program should be in the community. It needs to involve the Elders, family, community. We want continuity and longevity to our programs.

Aboriginal communities have very few shelters, particularly in northern communities. Child sexual abuse is only very slowly beginning to be reported. Men show a great deal of severe remorse. Attitudes of Indian and white males differ. Children are removed from the community (this might appear to place blame on the child) and offender is put on trial in his community. Reversal is recommended: child should stay in community and father to another community. Social workers need to be trained (bilingual). Person dealing in drugs was banished [as an example of ostracism as intervention].

No shelters in native communities, shelter offered to victims within community (to protect victims in one community, the employer (the Band) would terminate employment if the "restraining order" were breached). In some instances, other adults (Elders) and neglected children are also part of household where refuge is offered. Situation far from ideal. Element of respect and fear and element of extended family system and absence of shelters compete; need to look at other alternatives. When criminal justice system does not convict, Indian community enforce own regulations: man has to stay away and off reserve, otherwise ostracised.

In native communities, the concept of sheltering to protect the life of victims is an important one, but a shelter may also be provided by the family. On the other hand the absence of security for the victims and of support programs are factors that lead us to reconsider this approach.

Recommendations

Develop:
- And keep up cross cultural dialogue between native and non-native groups.
- Alternate models to address issues within certain communities, particularly native communities.

Recognize:
- And encourage requests by natives and recognize their need to find traditional values.
- That these values exist within a framework which previously consisted of a high degree of self-sufficiency and that it is necessary to encourage those elements which improve self-sufficiency.
- That this requires a great awareness of native demands, whose available living space is often limited as well as the effects of certain laws that in practice impose their criteria to the detriment of traditional values: an example: in Quebec, the certification of foster homes on a reserve cannot be granted by the native's social worker, it must be granted by the Centre for Social Services.

Enable: Aboriginal peoples to have a conference for themselves – focusing on violence in family, alcohol/drug abuse, child sexual abuse.

Children

Treatment for children should be broadened to include those who witness adult violence and young offenders and missing children. It is very important that the needs of these children be met with increased resources and sensitivity. Although the trend to take children into care has subsided somewhat, there is still concern that offenders remain in the home while children go into isolated foster care.

Discussion Notes

Treatment

[Provinces like] "Newfoundland has[ve] a great lack of resources for services to children. Violence against children and other family violence is sanctioned and condoned by government through the lack of resources provided and funded in this area. What about treatment for children who have been abused or who have witnessed abuse? Should it be the school system? No therapy in the school please, by one participant.

There is also a need for early treatment of young people (pre-adolescents) who display violent or abusive behaviour.

Lack of resources for very young offender: victim services have to be available.

One person questions why we take so many children into care. We need to question if that is the way to approach it. The protection model needs to be questioned for children.
We must not neglect abused children in falsely assuming that treatment modes are well established.

In case of rape – the child must be believed and supported as well as support for the family and peers.

Sheltering

What about supports for children? There are short stay shelters for abused children who may live there while problems are sorted out. Children should not have to stay in the hospital, which accentuates feelings of self-blame and confusion. Also, need community working groups on child sexual abuse. Aside from counselling groups for children, need counsellor in shelters.

Child victims of sexual abuse – in Manitoba it used to be practice to remove the child from the home. This suggested both parents were responsible. Government policy has changed – removing child is no longer done. The offender is removed for a long time or shorter time for treatment. This depends if the non-offending [parent] can agree. If she does not agree, the child suffers. Healing for child begins when mother has reconstituted herself as to what is actually true. Don't have resources for interaction with co-workers in all situations.

Problem is that generally a child is left in foster care while preparing for court – [foster parents] have little training and experience in child sexual abuse. Length of time child is in foster care tends to be too long; legal process too cumbersome. Ontario: crimes in foster care system, some are ill equipped to deal with kids, last resort, foster agencies have abused children, or kids in foster homes are offenders and the kids are victimized all over again.

Problem is providing quality service in institutional settings; a need for different levels of care; if not enough foster homes – get the offender out; legal issues: remove child but judges and court orders take so long – elicits a whole defensive reaction.

Foster homes – get nurturing in an institution - that can be the message – fix the institution instead of discarding children.

Protective intervention – New Brunswick courts have the power to remove children from the family unit.

Recommendations

Develop:

- A stronger link between missing children and abuse. The thrust and purpose of the initiative seems to have been lost between the cracks.
- Programs for adolescent offenders.
- Counselling groups for children and counsellors for children in shelters.
- Community working groups on child sexual abuse.
- Treatment programs for children who are witnesses to family violence; [note] Montreal demonstration projects on community-based victim assistance programs [who work] with close cooperation between police and community.

Question: Child protection model.

Listen: To people when you ask for advice – example of Bill C-15 which was implemented despite regional warnings.

Change: Rules that apply to foster homes.

Rekindle: Thoughts of the issue of abuse as being related to missing children:

- Parentally abducted children are emotionally and psychologically abused; as well, they are neglected as a parent takes on the role of fugitive.
- The parent may be running from abuse but are themselves abusing their children by running.
- Children are also abused within the confines of cults – not only children but also, women, men and elderly persons; ritualistic abuse must be given more thought.
- Canada's massive population of runaway children, many who have disconnected themselves from the family and perhaps even societal structures, are continually being abused by perpetrators in society; their plight must be given more thought and consideration. Family orientation does not appear to be a viable approach to work with this abused population.

Note: That for children, the[re is a] lack of training of foster parents and child care workers: worst solution to the problem. Best solution is to take the offender out but if not, put children into a more positive and supportive environment.

Disabled Persons

Developmentally disabled people: incarceration is not the alternative, so treatment programs for victims and offenders which are not drug related but behaviourally centred.

Recommendation

Need: More research for appropriate treatment programs for developmentally disabled.

The Elderly

Alternatives to the present sheltering structure are required for elderly victims of violence in consideration of their mobility and lifestyle needs. One suggestion was for shelters to be attached to seniors residences. Overall treatment and service needs are not being met through such programs as "Meals on Wheels" or homemaker services and greater involvement of institutional staff and health and social service professionals is required.

Discussion Notes

Sheltering

Shelters for women have little room for the elderly who are losing their mobility. It would be more appropriate to consider temporary sheltering and protected environments.

There are design issues that need to be addressed in institutions: privacy and appropriate respect for privacy, security; senior victims afraid it represents first step toward being institutionalized.

For elderly the problem with universal shelter is that women and children are priority.

Seniors have different needs with regards to sheltering: cannot negotiate stairs, [tolerate] lots of noise, etc., physical constraints.

Practical solution to have seniors shelters attached to seniors' residences? Not sure if that is best alternative. Look at legal way of removing offender but then who will look after the elderly partner?

The experience of the elderly in shelters follows upon experience (example: wider families); for the elderly, it is often not a question of family violence nor abuse, but communication for the handicapped.

We should look at other alternatives like second-stage housing (apartments grouped together for after they leave shelter) same thing happens with women.

Elderly women in shelters have two problems: first: it is not easy to provide for them; ex: bunk beds, needing walkers; secondly: family values: elderly women ask for help over the telephone – most do not ask for sheltering. It is well recognized that funds are insufficient – certain statistics infer that refuges are needed more at certain times of the year – so that at other times there is enough room – it is recommended that the federal government consult many persons in the field (in shelters or connected services): shelters find it difficult to be responsive to the needs of the elderly, of ethnic groups, of the handicapped or of others experiencing mobility problems.

The problem for the elderly in shelters is the lack of affection; it is also difficult for them to cohabitate with young women and children.

Underfunded to adapt transition homes to be accessible to handicapped persons; they also need the care of attendants and staff trained to deal with elder persons.

Residence for elderly financed by CMHC not always disposed to deal with people with handicaps.

Elderly already less ready to be relocated, so these low-cost housing units might prove to be a better alternative.

Treatment and Needs

We must not neglect abused elderly in falsely assuming that treatment modes are well established.

Elder abuse; need to extend pension benefits after death of a spouse.

We need a continuation of services. Are they sufficient? Elder abuse was not discussed extensively. Many of us are not aware of all of the services available to elderly. Do elders need to be handled differently? yes, they possess different needs, have dignities to be respected that are not common to other forms of family violence. What kinds of support systems do elderly adults need? One point made is the inevitability of caregiver burnout. Some communities have alternate temporary care. One common problem for elders is the mobility issue and potential difficulty in adapting to new environments. One option is safe homes for elderly as opposed to a shelter. Another possibility is community involvement in that homes or elder couples employ resources/services such as assistance in food shopping, preparation, house cleaning, nursing, etc., as opposed to institutionalization which may remove them from their immediate community. This may help in ameliorating feelings of isolation. One form of abuse is disenfranchisement of elders; e.g., mandatory retirement, dislocation to institutions which removes individual's dignity. Elders should have a choice of options from which to choose. Shelters are not solutions for everyone, including younger abused victims. Services need to consider individuals, culture, history, needs, etc. A separate support service should be instigated for women who may not want to enter a shelter. There they could be informed of alternatives.

Elderly are becoming predominant in the country and possibly will become a problem in the future. Support and assistance for "elder abuse" and children is special need. Most abused elders are women and is often third person [abuse] and also some suffer spousal abuse: sexual attacks, con artists, physical abuse – afraid to report/will lose the caregiver. Laws in Manitoba can imprison family/ caregiver – it is against law not to support their parent. Elder abuse is only coming to the forefront.

Issue of protection with elderly – cannot make rational decision on own, society needs to protect them.

One of the [assumed] fears of elderly people [is] that they tolerate person who is mistreating them: this is not supported in practice.

Study on cost of home care program; are cutting back on seniors – should be opposed.

Many myths are being forwarded on old, disabled women: Meals on Wheels, Homemaker Services are part of different issues and let's not say we have addressed violence to elders by using these services.

Older persons are at greatest risk of being institutionalized in Canada. We, the elderly, have the right to fail when we are old; no one feels old until your health fails or your mind fails (only 10% of elders experience this); the elderly are not all at risk. Most can take control of lives and destiny.

Recommendations

Provide:

- Elder abuse victims with a choice of options and separate support services where they can be informed of alternatives.
- Appropriate protective places for seniors.
- Elderly with homecare services as alternative to institutionalization.
- Elderly [with support] to maintain their independence as long as they can – live at home, etc.
- Money over and above the Old Age Pension and Supplementary Income Program to assist seniors to maintain their lifestyles.
- Expansion of housing options/alternatives for seniors to reflect a move beyond the promotion of the reliance on family, remaining in own home (have equated staying at home with independence versus institutions with loss of independence) and keeping families together (e.g., supported independent living, homesharing).
- Alternatives for elderly victims of abuse: shelters as exist do not meet their needs; same for young women under 18 and immigrant women.

- Better funding to make shelter accessible to older and disabled women and personnel to be trained to look after such residents (mainly younger women); this would need to be reflected in brochures.

Promote: Elder abuse as a higher and special issue on our review of violence.

Recognize:

- That abuse is a crime and should be treated as such.
- Theft in institutions as a serious issue requiring measures to protect personal property and the prosecution of staff involved.
- That shelters are not the best solution for everyone – necessary safety net and protection/no other alternative.

Extend: Pension benefits after death of spouse.

It is: Imperative to have follow-up and enforcement of the standards of care [in institutions].

Need:

- Research on needs and actions pertaining to institutional abuse.
- More research on effective intervention for elder abuse; problem is that intervention almost always means institutionalization.
- To address the problem of burnout by caregivers.
- To listen to the stories of the older person. It is very dangerous to only hear the professional point of view.
- Shelters appropriate for elderly people whether through development of new ones or expansion of existing [ones].
- Provincial governments to improve institutional standards of care through consultation with seniors (including users).
- To determine the needs of shelters for the abused elderly, e.g., type, amount, recognition through design of their special need.
- The federal and provincial governments (in consultation with seniors' residents) to address specific design concerns of institutions and shelters regarding the privacy, personal security and protection of personal properties of residents.
- Choice of housing (could be age segregated or age integrated) affordable housing.
- Patient advocates who are independent of a service/institution to serve as watch dogs for people in institutional care: to assist residents, to identify issues, to negotiate.
- The Federation of Municipalities to have input into the national strategy.

Examine:

- And assess the need for shelters for seniors who are battered: specialized services (e.g., shelter in Manitoba built special wing); need to go beyond just providing temporary shelter.

Ensure:

- That people are aware that New Horizons gives grants to fund elder abuse initiatives and more study is greatly needed.

- That the desperate need for more professionals already in the field who are sensitized to the needs of the elderly is recognized.

Ethnocultural Groups

Changes in policy and practice are needed to meet the treatment and sheltering needs of ethnocultural women: stays should be longer and translation available.

Discussion Notes

Chinese women use agencies with Chinese-speaking workers and go to live with others in their own communities. However, ethnocultural interpreters services program of last three years in Ontario is quite successful in reaching victimized minority women and this has led to incredible increase in number of minority women from non-English-speaking background who now go to shelters. Need more services to facilitate this.

Some suggestion of need for transition homes specific to needs of immigrant women re: translation and longer stay to prepare for independent living, different food needs, etc. Another group member suggested we might want to look in the direction of supporting existing shelters to be adequately resourced in order to meet these unique needs of immigrant women instead of splintering.

Abused in homes, then removed to foster homes (not same ethnic group), nothing done to help family while child gone, children end up belonging to neither culture.

Visible minority communities; remarks of speaker were patronizing and annoying; immigrant staff do all the work and get called "interpreters" and not invited to such forums as well as not recognized at agency level; i.e., immigrant agencies are not being recognized.

Recommendations

Need:

- More services like the ethnocultural interpreter service in Ontario to facilitate women from different cultural communities using existing shelters.
- To tailor counselling to different cultural backgrounds.
- To recognize that immigrants need different treatment model to suit cultural differences.
- To become much more sensitized to cross-cultural issues.
- Social policies that consider the special needs of ethnic cultures and children falling between.

Rural and Remote Communities

Alternatives to the mainstream sheltering model and intervention models should be considered to meet the needs of women who must deal with localized pressures to keep the problem a secret.

Services

Lack of support services in rural areas: women experience a lot of community pressure in rural areas to return to abusive relationship. Farm women are isolated from support, or safety. Solutions imposed from outside onto rural communities really don't work. Involving the extended family could be valuable for both women's and men's programs as the extended family may put great pressure on the woman to reconcile or in other ways contribute to the continuance of abuse.

Requirement to own land excludes north.

Sufficient regional transition homes to serve the needs of "rural and remote" women in closely surrounding communities.

Recommendations

Explore: Options of multi-use of residential facilities in remote areas.

Note:

- That in smaller communities everyone should be informed that a shelter exists. Shelters are not always the best solution; funding should be as flexible as possible. Could be "on call" situations arranged for or transportation available for outside the community shelter.
- That there are creative programs in rural communities: this information should be shared; flexibility is the key to a national strategy – need options.
- That we should look at alternatives to taking women and children from home and school environment even for a short time, keeping in mind the security element particularly in isolated communities. Northern communities are so family-related that we might run into a "covering up" situation if women kept in home.

PARTICIPANTS' PERSPECTIVES

4.0 PARTICIPANTS' PERSPECTIVES

This part deals with the varying perspectives and concerns conveyed by participants about the organization, format, content, and representation at the **Working Together: 1989 National Forum on Family Violence**. It is based on information from three sources: an analysis of the Evaluation Forms submitted by participants at the end of the National Forum; comments and concerns included within the working group notes including concerns with regard to racism; and a summary of comments and recommendations to government, which were presented by an ad hoc feminist caucus group at the Forum.

It should be noted that an ad hoc aboriginal caucus group requested a meeting with the host departments during the Forum. The concerns raised by the group during the meeting included representation from aboriginal groups at the Forum, correct reporting of aboriginal issues raised in the groups and the possibility of an aboriginal conference on family violence.

4.1 Summary of Formal Evaluation

Of the 382 Forum participants, 136 or 36% submitted their Evaluation Forms. Summaries of the responses to each of the first four questions are provided, as well as a combined summary of the responses to Questions 5 and 6. As much as possible, the original wording from the Evaluation Forms has been retained. Statements have been grouped in descending order according to the frequency with which they were reported.

1. What were your expectations of the National Forum on Family Violence?

Participants expected to:

- network with people from other organizations across Canada;
- share ideas and information;
- learn about family violence and methods being used to prevent it;
- be heard ("a chance for all to speak");
- assist in the process of developing a national strategy;
- focus exclusively on one topic (e.g., child abuse) while in group;
- determine the degree of federal commitment in the area;
- define the problem and possible solutions/alternatives;
- ensure that the view of caring by police was brought to the table;
- have a women-centred conference;
- have the Forum be the only consultation prior to the development of a national strategy;
- see nothing concrete come out of the Forum;
- see no focus since the term "family violence" was being used.

2. *Were your expectations of the National Forum on Family Violence met? Please circle appropriate response and explain.*

***Responses*:** **yes** 30% **no** 18% **somewhat** 45% **no response** 7%

Explanations:

- Participants hoped that they would be able to learn more about family violence, network with people across Canada, be exposed to new and innovative ideas and participate in the development of a national strategy.
- While the interdisciplinary structure was challenging and "easier than expected," there were concerns and frustrations regarding the array of topics and perspectives, and the impact that diversity had upon the ability of groups to focus and reach consensus on specific issues ("speak as one voice") and to make clearly worded recommendations. A lack of "political will" on the part of helpers/workers was identified although the calibre of expertise was high.
- Some would have liked more attention paid to prior consultations, child and elder abuse, treatment issues, sexual assault, and Indian and Inuit concerns through increased representation, more presentations from the authors of the background papers, and preparation of participants.
- While it was frustrating for some to be in position of teacher, others had their expectations of learning and being heard met: "It provoked me to understand consensus and issues and I will go back and get others involved."

3. *How useful were the discussion papers provided in advance of the National Forum on Family Violence? Please circle the appropriate responses. (The value "Missing" was assigned when nothing was circled or when two choices were marked (Questions 3 and 4)).*

Responses	Not Useful	Useful	Very Useful	Missing
Wife Abuse:	7%	50%	34%	10%
Child Abuse:	11%	49%	25%	15%
Elder Abuse:	13%	48%	29%	12%

4. *Please rate the following and circle the appropriate responses.*

Responses	Poor	Good	Very Good	Missing
Terms of Reference:	24%	49%	13%	15%
Workshop Groupings:	13%	55%	29%	3%
Facilitation:	9%	45%	41%	5%
Plenary Addresses:	10%	50%	27%	13%
On Site Proceedings:	22%	45%	15%	18%

5. *What is your overall impression of the National Forum on Family Violence? And,*

6. *Do you have any other comments?*

Combined Responses:

Concern was expressed by many that there was inadequate representation from aboriginal groups, immigrant groups, seniors, the disabled and Francophones. One participant indicated "the Forum participation was an excellent reflection of how power is distributed in our culture." The agenda was viewed as being too ambitious, with an attempt to cover too many issues too quickly. Many found the Forum too large. Some appreciated the effort and the thought. Others were frustrated, confused and disappointed by the process. It "tried to be all things to all people and ended up not pleasing many."

Additional comments:

- The Forum was well organized and planned.
- The structure and composition of the participants combined to deal with wife assault to the exclusion of the other two streams.
- The Forum was a brave attempt, exciting, helpful.
- It should have included proceedings from other sessions on family violence as a building block.
- Scientific content was missing.
- Persons who attend a conference such as this, to primarily grind the axe, should stay home.
- There was a need to focus more on the wisdom of the community of directly involved workers.

- It was a good experience.
- A good government public relations.
- It was another opportunity to consult the federal government without participation.
- An agenda had already been decided upon before the start of the conference - there was an air of manipulation.
- Government has yet to declare itself on the philosophical/action plan for family violence.
- It was a waste of time for grass-roots people.

4.2 Comments and Concerns Recorded in Working Group Notes

Statements included within the Working Group Notes for the five themes pertained primarily to the structure and format of the Forum, representation, and to the on-site summaries.

Structure/Format of the Forum

- There's no microphone to ask questions – where do we challenge? Purpose of coming together is to share the goals, discuss ideas. We're coming from so many different perspectives with our own agendas, there is still an assumption that we're here with a common purpose and common background. Even with the problems in structure, the Forum is an opportunity to network and to use the information that is available.
- The structure of conference is too white, too male, too professional and is not accountable to women, and this is frustrating.
- We see that much of the conference structure limits us from rearranging the topics to be more productive.
- Concern was expressed that the needs of children and elderly who are abused were generally overlooked/ignored; there is a false public perception that society provides necessary services for children – the reality is far from that; some of the tendency to overlook these areas may have resulted from the personal agendas of the participants around our table – female abuse was the general topic.
- During the Forum, the emphasis should not be entirely on violence against women.
- We question the division of French and English participants as neither group could share their perspectives together in groups, reports or open Forums. [editor: four of the twenty groups were provided with simultaneous translation in both French and English]
- Recommendation: have more conferences emphasizing front-line workers in less lavish settings.

Representation

- Other conferences should invite school superintendents/trustees.
- This conference has not included visibly disabled people, e.g., no sign language interpretation; few visible minorities; the obvious exclusion of disabled people is an act of abuse on the part of the conference organizers towards this group of people.

- Aboriginal issues do not rise up high enough to help us in these forums; people speak highly about our approach but our views get diffused/lost; how will our aboriginal content show up? to be an integrated approach? nobody here to point to to ensure that this issue is brought up.
- Conference could accommodate the Ministry of State for Indian Affairs but could not accommodate the needs of the Inuit.
- This Forum reflects the lack of involvement of immigrant or visible minority communities; remarks of one speaker were patronizing and annoying; immigrant staff do all the work and get called "interpreters" and not invited to such forums as well as not being recognized at agency level, i.e., immigrant agencies are not being recognized.
- Issue of French participation – lack of Quebec experience, speakers, resource people.
- Not enough representation from front-line workers.
- The group representing the elders was left out of the conference.
- A lot of concern from transition houses and rape crisis centres; no acknowledgment of their expertise.

On-Site Summaries

- The comments we made were whitewashed and very "motherhood" statement-oriented; is it internal to this symposium? If it goes into the government report in this format, the information will have lost the "punch" from the speakers in our group as well as many of the details.
- We don't trust the reporting process.
- Our group has consistently discussed First Nation issues and these have never appeared in the summaries; this again reflects the lack of attention given to the special needs and demands of First Nations people; situation should be rectified in those documents and other documents to follow.
- Regarding the statement made in the Theme 1: Summary "immigrant families must be educated to conform to Canadian values," we feel this statement was taken out of context in the edited format, and does not reflect our intentions. The intent was not to be racist but to suggest that the federal government should inform new Canadians about the laws relating to family violence and the resources available to them. A further comment was made that Canadians could learn about family life from immigrant families.
- Our group wishes to say that its views on cultural diversity were not represented accurately in the reporting from the first day. The group identified the error in the report on Tuesday, but understood the report could not be amended during the conference. An accurate statement is: Protection and prevention efforts must be sensitive to cultural differences, and must respect family patterns.

Follow-up Document

- Important that participants have access to draft document of proceedings before final printing.
- Need to ensure that terminology is feminized and does not remain gender-neutral, especially in French texts.

Other

- The feminist paper was an individual decision only; many don't agree on all points.
- Concerns were expressed that racial biases may have stimulated some points made by groups in relation to new Canadians.

4.3 Comments and Recommendations to Government by the Feminist Caucus

There were two spontaneous plenary addresses at the Forum. The first was a presentation of Feminist Caucus Principles on the morning of the closing day. Another presentation, which built upon the first one, was made to the plenary session by Eunadie Johnson, on behalf of the ad hoc Feminist Caucus Group, immediately prior to the closing address. The following text, which was submitted to the Family Violence Prevention Division, Health and Welfare Canada, by Eunadie Johnson, summarizes the comments and recommendations from her presentation.

Comments and Recommendations

Eunadie Johnson
Executive Director, Thompson Crisis Centre

"A sizable group within the Forum reached consensus on the following issues, a number of which are positive, while unfortunately, a number are negative. On the positive side, it was agreed upon that the small working group structure of the Forum was beneficial and that regional and sectoral representation within the groups were adequately balanced. Constituency representation was, however, not good.

The discussion papers were well prepared and thoughtful but unfortunately were not used within the Forum as points of reference. Nor were the issues within those papers taken as read or agreed to. It could even be said that the discussion papers were counteracted by the structure of the Forum and the attendance of the Forum.

With respect to the negative aspects of the Forum, a general feeling emerged that participants' voices were silenced by the structure of the Forum which predicated that participants spoke only to members of their particular working group. Being given little opportunity to speak directly with the government because of the reporting mechanism. While it must be acknowledged that a Forum of 400 can be unwieldy in terms of communication, the feedback reporting mechanism suggested control. For example, the lack of opportunity to comment from the plenary floor and the discouragement of any feedback outside the reporting mechanism was frustrating.

This group strongly endorses the recommendations of the feminist caucus which criticizes the dearth of representation at the Forum of front-line support workers from, for example, women's refuges, the shelter movement, rape crisis centres and visible minority women, i.e., aboriginal, immigrant, disabled, elderly, etc. This group further recommends:

- A summary of each group's discussions to be sent to each group member for comments.
- That government funding be provided for the production of an alternative report.
- That group seminars be organized to sensitize government bureaucrats to issues of racism, sexism, ageism, violence against women and children within and outside the home and to sensitize government workers to the fact that Canada is truly a multicultural and multiracial society.
- No national strategy should be developed until funding is provided to organize a number of national conferences from a multicultural and a multiracial women's perspective:
    - the conference for the National Association of Transition Houses which was proposed;
    - conferences for the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres, womens centres, as promised;
    - a conference for seniors;
    - we support the aboriginal peoples' call for a separate Family Violence Conference to be organized by them;

  and that the knowledge, expertise and recommendations coming out of these conferences be recognized and used in the strategy being created by the federal government in dealing with the violence against women and children, disabled and elderly.

We further recommend the continuation of the consultation process which began at this Forum. The discussion paper out of this conference and the proposed recommended conferences be circulated and reviewed by major groups, i.e., women, child advocacy, visible minority, disabled, immigrant, elderly, aboriginal and isolated regions to both reviewers and participants of Forum.

It is this reviewed discussion paper that will form the basis of the consultation with provincial governments, non-governmental organizations and national women's groups.

APPENDIX A

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APPENDIX B

Program

APPENDIX B

Program

FINAL PROGRAM

SUNDAY, June 18, 1989

4:00 p.m.	Registration (Adam Room, Chateau Laurier Hotel)
5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.	Welcoming Reception (Adam Room, Chateau Laurier Hotel)

MONDAY, June 19, 1989

8:00 a.m.	Registration (Rideau Street Entrance, Government Conference Centre)
9:00 a.m.	**Opening Remarks and Opening Address** (Main Hall) Chair: Dr. Peter Glynn, Chair, Interdepartmental Steering Committee on Family Violence Speakers: John Tait, Deputy Minister, Justice Canada Honourable Perrin Beatty, Minister of National Health and Welfare
9:30 a.m.	**Introduction of Themes** Dr. Peter Glynn, Chair, Interdepartmental Steering Committee on Family Violence and Assistant Deputy Minister, Social Service Programs Branch, Health and Welfare Canada
9:45 a.m.	**Plenary Panel – Theme I** **Extent and Nature of Problems** Chair: Louise Bergeron de Villiers, Deputy Coordinator, Status of Women Canada Speakers: Nancy Gnaedinger, Senior Consultant, DPA Group Inc. Linda MacLeod, Freelance Researcher and Consultant Andy Wachtel, Research Associate, United Way of the Lower Mainland
10:30 a.m.	Break (Main Lounge) Displays (Annex Room – throughout the Forum)
10:45 a.m.	**Concurrent Workshops – Theme I** (in designated rooms at Government Conference Centre)
12:30 p.m.	**Luncheon Address – Theme II** (Ballroom, Chateau Laurier Hotel)
	Education of the Public, Professions and Workers in the Field Chair: Lise Bourgault, representative, Parliamentary Secretary, Minister of National Health and Welfare Speaker: Rix Rogers, Special Adviser to the Minister of National Health and Welfare on Child Sexual Abuse

2:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. **Concurrent Workshops – Theme II** (Government Conference Centre)

6:00 p.m. Cash Bar (Ballroom, Chateau Laurier Hotel)

7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Banquet and Theatre Group Insight/Théâtre des Lueurs (Ballroom, Chateau Laurier Hotel)

TUESDAY, June 20, 1989

9:00 a.m. **Reporting Session for Themes I and II** (Main Hall)
Chair: Richard Clippingdale, Assistant Under-secretary of State, Secretary of State
Speakers: (Theme I) Dr. David Wolfe, Associate Professor, Psychology, University of Western Ontario
(Theme II) Jill Wright, Coordinator, Justice Resource Service, PEI Department of Justice

9:30 a.m. **Plenary Panel – Theme III**

Prevention of Violence and Protection of the Vulnerable
Speakers: Lorraine Berzins, Program Coordinator, Church Council on Justice and Corrections
Eunadie Johnson, Executive Director, Thompson Crisis Centre
Jillian Ridington, Researcher, Disabled Women's Network of Canada

10:15 a.m. Break (Main Lounge)

10:30 a.m. **Concurrent Workshops – Theme III**

12:30 p.m. **Luncheon Addresses** (Ballroom, Chateau Laurier Hotel)
Chair: Ian Glen, Assistant Deputy Solicitor General, Police and Security Branch

Business Involvement and Family Violence
Jacques Langevin, Vice-President, Human Resources and Corporate Affairs, AVON Canada Inc.
Rita Karakas, Executive Director, YWCA of Canada

Theme IV – Justice in the Intervention and Prosecution of Family Violence
Speaker: Ian Glen

2:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. **Concurrent Workshops – Theme IV** (Government Conference Centre)

WEDNESDAY, June 21, 1989

9:00 a.m.	**Reporting Session for Themes III and IV** (Main Hall) Chair: John Rayner, Assistant Deputy Minister, Indian Services, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. Speakers: (Theme III) Gilles Rondeau, Directeur, Ecole de service social, Université de Montréal (Theme IV) Freda Steel, Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Manitoba
9:30 a.m.	**Plenary Panel – Theme V** **Support and Treatment for Victims and Offenders** Speakers: Maggie Hodgson, Executive Director, Nechi Institute Jennifer Mercer, Coordinator, Interagency Committee on Violence Against Women
10:00 a.m.	Break (Main Lounge)
10:30 a.m.	**Concurrent Workshops – Theme V** (Government Conference Centre)
12:30 p.m.	Buffet Lunch (in designated lounges at Government Conference Centre)
1:30 p.m.	**Concurrent Workshops – Theme V** conclude
2:30 p.m.	Break (Main Lounge)
3:00 p.m.	**Concluding Plenary Address** (Main Hall) Chair: Ole Ingstrup, Commissioner of the Correctional Services Canada, Solicitor General Canada Speaker: Honourable Barbara McDougall, Minister Responsible for Status of Women
3:20 p.m.	**Closing Remarks** Dr. Maureen Law, Deputy Minister, Health and Welfare Canada

BACKGROUND

The Working Together: 1989 National Forum on Family Violence is one component of a four-year (1988-1992) Federal Government initiative to develop long-term national approaches to the problem of family violence. Approximately 400 participants have been invited from public, private and voluntary agencies, the research community and corporate sector to actively identify and discuss issues and priority options relevant to the prevention of child abuse, wife abuse and elder abuse in Canada.

OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the National Forum on Family Violence are to:

- sustain a commitment to the reduction of family violence;
- improve the effectiveness of the efforts of all parties involved in all aspects of the family violence problem;
- promote cooperation among the many agencies and levels of governments involved in all aspects of the family violence problem;
- foster an interdisciplinary approach to the subject of family violence;
- identify areas of fundamental concern which could be addressed in Canada's response to family violence; and,
- establish priority options for dealing with family violence concerns over the long term.

SPONSORSHIP

Sponsorship of the National Forum is by the Government of Canada with six federal departments actively involved in the planning process. Members of the Interdepartmental Planning Committee for the Forum include Sally Andrews (Secretary of State), Brion Brandt (Health and Welfare Canada), Nancy DeClerq (Justice Canada), Joan Eliesen (Status of Women Canada), Hélène Dwyer-Renaud (Status of Women Canada), Elaine Laurier (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada), Vera Lagasse (Health and Welfare Canada), Randy Legault (Solicitor General Canada), Ambrose Murphy (Solicitor General Canada), and Kathy Stewart (Health and Welfare Canada).

APPENDIX C

Terms of Reference

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Overall Objectives

The 1989 National Forum on Family Violence has as its overall objectives to:

- sustain a commitment to the reduction of family violence;
- improve the effectiveness of the efforts of all parties involved in all aspects of the family violence problem;
- promote cooperation among the many agencies and levels of governments involved in all aspects of the family violence problem;
- foster an interdisciplinary approach to the subject of family violence;
- identify areas of fundamental concern which could be addressed in Canada's response to family violence; and
- establish priority options for Canada to deal with family violence concerns over the long term.

Major Themes

The Forum will address the issue of family violence under five major themes:

1. Extent and Nature of the Problem;
2. Education of the Public, Professions and the Workers in the Field;
3. Prevention of Family Violence and Protection of the Vulnerable;
4. Justice in the Intervention and Prosecution of Family Violence; and
5. Support and Treatment for Victims and Offenders.

Workshop Objectives

The concurrent workshops have a two-fold objective:

(1) to give the participants an opportunity to share their understanding of, and ideas on, the issues under each of the five major themes; and
(2) to allow each group to function as a multidisciplinary task force which examines issues and identifies strategic options for the prevention of family violence in Canada.

Your workshop group will have an opportunity to discuss all five themes. As you will note, every theme session has its own terms of reference which suggests a number of key topics. Your group will be expected to discuss each of the key topic areas. Under each topic, you will find a list of questions which highlight various aspects of the topic. Your group may choose which questions it wishes to address.

A facilitator will be assigned to your group to promote discussion and to assist in the examination of the specific concerns of children, women, the elderly, aboriginal people, disabled persons, ethnocultural groups, and rural and remote communities. A rapporteur will record your group's discussions.

The results of the workshop discussions will be summarized and made available the following day. Shortly after the Forum, proceedings based on the combined responses of all workshops will be distributed.

THEME 1: Extent and Nature on Family Violence

Topic 1: The Extent

The 1980s have been a decade of growing awareness about and action on the issue of family violence.

- How should we describe family violence and how extensive is the problem?
- What progress has been made?
- The women's movement has made a significant contribution to the development of family violence initiatives. How do we build on this foundation?

Topic 2: The Causes

The difficulty in addressing the problem of family violence is that its causes are many, interrelated and pervasive.

- What do we know about the core elements of all forms of family violence? victimization? battering behaviour?
- What is the interrelationship between family violence and other forms of violence? poverty? substance abuse?
- Is violence systemic to our society?

Topic 3: The Changing Family

Traditional concepts of what constitutes a family appear to be outdated.

- What is a functional/dysfunctional family? Should these terms be redefined?
- Do current social policies reflect the present-day structure and needs of Canadian families or are they in need of revision?

Topic 4: Research and Evaluation

Research in the field of family violence is growing, but there's still a lot we don't know.

- What have we learned from the research studies to date?
- What are the limits of research in the area of family violence?
- How can we ensure that these findings are plugged into the decision-making processes?

Topic 5: The Future

Our understanding of the extent and nature of family violence in Canada must be strengthened if we are to deal with family violence concerns over the long term.

- On what information areas should we focus our research and evaluation efforts in the next decade?
- What are the short- and long-term priorities which need to be addressed in Canada's response to family violence?
- How do we facilitate intersectoral/interagency coordination to increase our understanding of family violence?

THEME TWO: Education of the Public, Professions and Workers in the Field

Topic 1: Increasing Public Awareness

If knowledge is power, then public awareness of family violence issues is one important means of empowering individual Canadians.

- What should be the aim and content of public education programs? And how can we create a public dialogue?
- What is the role of schools in the area of information dissemination and the development of healthy attitudes?
- Mass media campaigns – do they work? Can they be made more effective? What are complementary strategies?
- How do we ensure culturally appropriate educational strategies? And, who should deliver the message?

Topic 2: Increasing Awareness Among Professions and Workers in the Field

Society places a tremendous amount of responsibility on the shoulders of the professions and front-line workers in the areas of family violence.

- What do the professions and front-line workers need to know to assist families in crisis?
- What are the different mechanisms by which the professions and front-line workers can increase their awareness and exchange information?
- How do we bring about positive attitudinal change among the professions already involved in the family violence issue?
- Who should be involved in developing professional awareness? And who should educate the educators?

Topic 3: The Future

Extending the awareness of the issues surrounding family violence must be a key element in Canada's overall prevention strategy for the next decade.

- Where should we concentrate our educational efforts in the 1990s?
- In what ways can we increase interdisciplinary cooperation in the development of educational initiatives directed at the family violence issue?

THEME 3: Prevention of Family Violence and Protection of the Vulnerable

Topic 1: Strategies for Prevention

The ongoing development of prevention strategies is central to Canada's family violence initiative.

- How do we design prevention strategies that address the best interests of the individual and the family?
- To whom should we be targeting our prevention strategies?
- How can we productively address the issue of primary prevention and the underlying causes of violence in our society?
- How do we best strengthen community involvement in and equal access to prevention programs?

Topic 2: Protecting the Vulnerable

Everyone in Canada deserves the active protection of their right to security of person.

- Who is most vulnerable? And how can we ensure that their concerns are heard?
- In our desire to protect, how do we ensure that the individual's right to self-determination and well-being are not overlooked?
- Strong intervention or the least intrusive measures – how do we strike a balance in protecting the vulnerable?

Topic 3: The Future

Enhancing our ability to prevent family violence will require the help of all concerned Canadians.

- In the next decade, where should we focus our prevention efforts?
- How do we improve interdisciplinary and intersectoral cooperation in the development of new prevention strategies?

THEME 4: Justice in the Intervention and Prosecution of Family Violence

Topic 1: Intervention Models

The refinement of different models and approaches is the key to the appropriate use of criminal sanctions for family violence.

- What are the most promising models of intervention?
- How can we ensure the appropriateness of procedures and protocols for the various forms of family violence?
- Who should intervene in cases of family violence?
- What are some of the alternative models of conflict resolution?

Topic 2: Prosecution of Family Violence

The number of criminal prosecution cases related to family violence is small, but growing. We have much to learn in this area.

- Is the criminal justice system the best instrument for controlling all forms of family related abuse?
- What are the effects of police charging policies with regard to family violence?
- Are the present sentencing and incarceration practices appropriate? How can they be improved?
- How can we best address the needs of the victim throughout the criminal justice process?

Topic 3: Mandatory Reporting

Individual rights and responsibilities are important concepts in the mandatory reporting of family violence.

- Mandatory reporting – does it work? Should it be expanded or should we look for alternatives?
- Who should report incidents of family violence? What should be reportable? And, to whom should it be reported?
- What are the rights of the individual to confidentiality, especially within the context of interagency and intersectoral cooperation?

Topic 4: The Future

Over the next decade, we must expand our information and experience in the area of law enforcement and legal intervention.

- What types of legislative changes, if any, should we consider in the l990s?
- How do we ensure coordination of information and services between the criminal justice system and other service agencies?
- What further action is required to address the criminal justice and prosecution issues with regard to family violence?

THEME 5: Support and Treatment for Victims and Sufferers

Topic 1: Sheltering Victims

Victims of family violence require a wide range of support services during the transition from abuse to empowerment. A safe shelter from the storm of family violence is often the first service required.

- Are shelters the best solution for everyone?
- Should the offender – not the victim – be removed from the house?
- What is the effect of existing shelter programs? And, what are the alternatives?
- How do we address the negative response of neighbourhoods to the establishment of shelters?

Topic 2: Support and Assistance Services for Victims

For victims and their families, support and assistance services are the bridge to a new life.

- How can we build upon existing service networks?
- What types of social, economic and legal supports should be available to victims in transition?
- How can we best provide long-range services and assistance to family violence victims and their families?
- What are the options for supporting the delivery of the ongoing operation of services?
- What should be the extent of user participation in the allocation of resources and the delivery of services?

Topic 3: Offender Treatment Programs

Communities need access to a range of treatment programs to bring about substantive behaviour change in abusers.

- What are the treatment needs of abusers?
- Should offender treatment programs be mandatory? If so, what are the implications?
- What kinds of alternatives to traditional treatment programs need to be developed?
- How can we assess the effectiveness of treatment programs?

Topic 4: The Future

We must all work together to create a safer, caring society.

- Volunteer involvement – how could we better utilize and involve this important sector in the support and treatment of victims and abusers?
- How can we best avoid bureaucratizing our support and treatment services?
- How do we ensure interagency and intersectoral coordination so that we can provide a continuum of programs and services?